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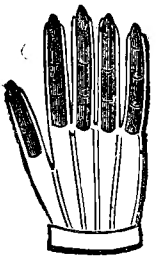
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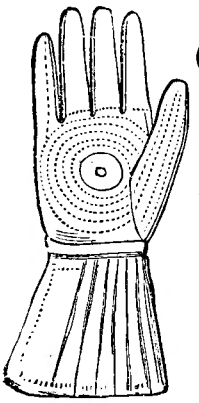
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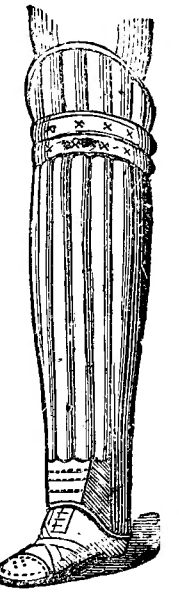
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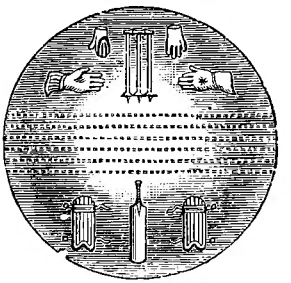
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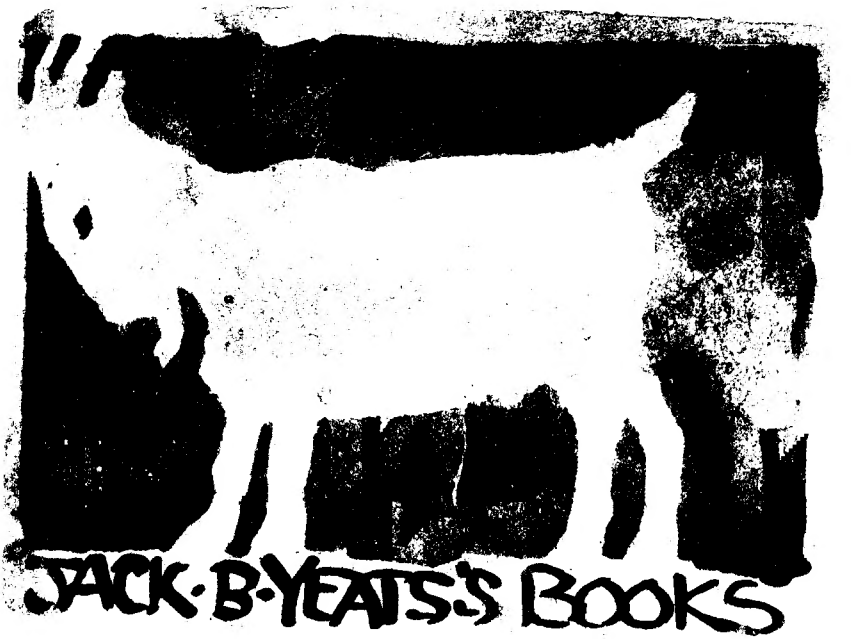
BEST REPORTS

OF

Cricket,

AND

ALL OTHER BRANCHES OF SPORT.


JACK·B·YEATS'S BOOKS

SPORTS AND RECREATIONS

IN

TOWN AND COUNTRY.

BY

FREDERICK GALE

(THE OLD BUFFER).



LONDON:

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1888.

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PREFACE.

SOME twelve years ago the late Mr. Baily, the publisher and originator of *Baily's Magazine of Sports and Pastimes*—which is familiarly known now as "The Old Green Cover"—asked me if I could contribute an article on cricket in the days of the grand old Kent and Sussex elevens, as one of the greatest sportsmen in England, who took an interest in the magazine (and who died in 1884), was anxious that a record of past cricket heroes should be preserved in its pages. Happening to have known Fuller Pilch for the last twenty-five years of his life, I put in writing all that I could remember which had fallen from his lips—during many a long evening spent with him—under the name of "Fuller Pilch's Back Parlour," which appeared in a book of mine, published in the summer of 1887 by Messrs. Swan Sonnenschein & Co., under the title of "The Game of Cricket." After the publication of that article in 1875, the old sportsman who was the instigator of its production, and who was a leading member of the Pugilistic Club, when the Ring was supported by noblemen and gentlemen, asked if I could do something in the same style about the Prize Ring, and, curiously enough, I had the materials at hand, as during

some years of my pupilage in London, after leaving school, I lunched every day at the Castle Tavern in Holborn (now the Napier Restaurant), which was kept by "Tom Spring," the ex-champion of England, who was one of Nature's gentlemen. It was a very respectable place, and answered to what is now called a "Luncheon Bar." So I set my memory to work, and reproduced all that I could remember of numberless conversations with Tom Spring, under the name of "Tom Spring's Back Parlour"—which appears in these pages, and which has not been hitherto reproduced. Mr. Baily, for whose memory I have a great respect, and myself, so to say, "put our horses together," and he gave me a *carte blanche* to write what I pleased connected with English sports and sketches of country and town life, and I availed myself largely of his offer, so much so that a considerable portion of this volume consists of a selection from my articles which appeared in Baily's magazine. In fact, the exceptions are four papers only, namely, "Boxing and Athletics" and "My First Salmon," which come from a now extinct weekly paper styled *Ashore or Afloat*; "The Racing Stable," from *Vanity Fair*; and "Betting and Gambling," from *Sporting and Dramatic*. I take this opportunity of tendering my sincere thanks to Mr. Baily, who reigns in his late father's stead, for allowing me to reproduce my former writings. I thought it better to leave the sketches just as they were written, as, for what they are worth, they are mostly reminiscences of happy memories, and are all drawn from the life. People who call those of my school *laudatores temporis acti*, will find, when the time comes that they cannot shut their eyes to the fact that the shades of early evening are closing over them, that the greatest pleasure

in life is to bring back recollections of scenes and faces which have passed away.

I have always looked on my fellow travellers of all classes, through life, as brother puppets, who have been, or are, on the wires at the same time as myself, all dancing to different tunes; and I have taken every opportunity of mixing with as many of them as I could, and I have yet to learn that any puppet—however gaudy his dress and spangles may be—has a right to classify any body of his brother puppets, whom the costumier has clothed in more humble attire, as "the lower orders," without being self-convicted of "judging his neighbour." I adhere to my *nom de plume*, "The Old Buffer," as the American Cricketers, when in England on a visit, told me that whenever they see any letter or article with that signature they look out for something about old-fashioned England of the past.

THE OLD BUFFER.

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TOM SPRING'S BACK PARLOUR.

I HOPE I shall not get a reputation for being a pothouse snob because I invite my reader to come into Tom Spring's private parlour. In the month of February, 1842, I was launched into the little village of London. I fancy my candour proved my death-warrant, for on paterfamilias suggesting the propriety of my commencing a profession at the age of eighteen off, my reply was, "Let me have six months more, sir, at school, or I shall miss playing in the Lord's eleven again this summer." Paterfamilias was wise, and foresaw that my mind was on athletics more than on work, and I am sure he was right. When started in a place of business I was in doubt where to go for my luncheon, for I was utterly green to London, when a name on a lamp close to Gray's Inn gateway caught my eye. That name was "Tom Spring."

I suppose that all the world knows that Spring's real name was Winter. He appeared at the old Fives Court sixty years ago, or thereabouts, and when his name was asked for (according to history), one Paddington Jones shouted out "Young Spring."

At school we always took in *Bell's Life* for the

cricket in the summer and for general news and amusement, especially the fights, in the winter; and Bell indulged in caricatures of "Heads of the People," with poetical descriptions, some of which caricatures, as we afterwards learnt, were drawn by the immortal John Leech, when a young student in London. I can remember my old friends now. Caricatures of the Lord Mayor, Common Councilmen, the City Marshal, &c., and one in particular, of an assault case at a police-court in which a young lady-costermonger, kissing the book, deposes:

> "Ees, sir, I'll do as you desire,
> And tell 'ee how it coomed about:
> Muggins called Giles a thundering liar,
> And so Bill Giles sarved Muggins out."

I very likely shall be discursive, and reproduce some of the eccentricities of Bell when Vincent Dowling was consul.

Two or three things to my uneducated mind seemed impossible: one was that any men could really have seen the Derby and have lived, or have spoken to such men as Tom Spring, or Peter Crawley, or Tom Cribb—more impossible still to realise,—and have walked about afterwards as ordinary citizens. I pictured to myself a prize-fighter as a ruffian who lived on nearly raw meat, knocked every one down who contradicted him, and out of whose mouth curses and ribaldry proceeded, and into whose mouth went nothing but brandy. However, curiosity overcame my scruples, and I walked up the passage into the Castle in Holborn, and found myself in a very comfortable bar, behind which stood a tall, broad-shouldered man, who looked a very well-to-do Baptist minister, minus the hypocritical smile which some of those gentlemen assume—an oily, unctuous, cold, untoasted-muffin expression. He must have been nearly six feet high, if not quite, and boasted a pair of very broad shoulders. His hair was getting slightly grizzled, as were

his whiskers, which were bushy; but I never shall forget his eyes. If I remember rightly, his eyes were rather far apart; and in speaking, a kind of frown, which was not an angry frown, seemed to come over his face and wrinkled his forehead a little. His nose was disarranged from the aquiline somewhat, as most of the P.R. heroes experienced. He had a nice voice and a frank and open manner, which stamped him as one of nature's gentlemen. He was dressed in an evening black suit, though it was early in the afternoon—for he always dressed for dinner,—and wore a white neckcloth, and a brooch with some hair in it in his shirt frill, and his boots were polished in a manner such as I never saw surpassed, except by the late Mr. Daniel O'Connell; and it was enough to raise the envy of Beau Brummel to have seen old Dan's boots.

I stood looking at him in blank amazement, and I thought to myself, "Can this man be Tom Spring, the great prize-fighter?" Spring looked at me, and said with a smile, "Well, young gentleman, what are you staring at?" My answer was, "Are you *really* Tom Spring?" "Well, I was Tom Spring this morning," he said, "and I suppose I am now."

Having made known my wants, which were some bread-and-cheese and a glass of stout, Spring summoned his niece from the back parlour, which opened out of the bar, and my luncheon was placed on the counter. Now for Tom Spring's niece—I never knew her name, except that she was called "Mrs. B." She was a widow, of very considerable dimensions, of about forty years of age, fresh coloured with a pair of arms from which I should have been very sorry to have received a "one, two." An active little curly-headed waiter, named Hickman (a relative of the celebrated gasman), and a potboy, Joe Phelps (brother to Brighton Bill) completed the establishment, so far as the outer world could see; and a very quiet, orderly household it was.

I used to go daily for my luncheon, and after a little while I was invited into the sanctum; but I never smoked a pipe in Spring's parlour, for if I remember rightly, smoking was not allowed in the daytime in the front bar, and never in the private parlour.

The Castle was a quiet, cosy place, well removed from Holborn by a long passage, and there was a homely appearance about it all. There was generally a well-to-do cat snoozing in the sun, and a bird hanging up in his cage, which drew his own water with a little bucket and chain, and a thrush or blackbird singing, and frequently some flowers. In fact, nothing could be less like a prize-fighter's home. The Castle was a *bonâ fide* luncheon house.

Bullet-headed ruffians, resembling bull-dogs who had been baptized with what Charles Dickens called "a large tract of barren country behind the ear" (though, by-the-bye, Dickens utterly failed in painting a life-picture in the character of "the Chicken"), dressed in flash coats, with cheese-plate buttons adorned with fighting cocks and fancy devices, and wearing fur caps, had no place in that bar. They might go into the taproom if they did not get drunk or use bad language; though if they did, the way down the passage was speedily shown to them, and they would as soon have thought of insulting Tom Spring as a little parish clerk would of kicking the Archbishop of Canterbury. The old school, consisting of such men as Spring, Peter Crawley, Jem Ward, Jem Burn, Frank Redmond, and the like, had a position; and having been backed by noblemen and gentlemen of the highest rank, they had acquired that natural good-breeding which is engendered by associating with people much above them in society. You see this in gamekeepers, cricketers of good stamp, huntsmen, yachtsmen, and the like, who have made their services essential to the enjoyment of men of fortune, and who have been treated

with confidence and respect by the supporters of a pleasure in which master and servant have a common interest.

Spring christened me "young gentleman," and I christened him "governor;" and I can honestly say, at this distance of time, I look back with gratitude to his kindness to me. London at the time I am speaking of was at about its very worst. There were few railways to get out by, no Saturday half-holidays, no cricket ground but Lord's, no volunteers, few boating clubs, and every kind of blackguardism was put under one's very nose by day and by night. The Tom and Jerry days were not extinct. Most of the flash supper-rooms and the upper boxes of the theatres were a disgrace to a civilised country, and peopled with as delicate an assembly of the softer (?) sex as the stage is now too often, to the delectation of audiences who are delighted with posturing, semi-nudity, and low slang; and "fast life" meant going to the devil, and ruin of health and happiness. Bachelor life in chambers and in lodgings consisted much of card-playing and drinking hard; and a large number of youngsters, after a short stay in London, got quite tired of ladies' society.

Now, I remember old Tom's first "paternal." I went for my usual luncheon earlier than customary, and instead of my pint of stout, wanted some cold brandy-and-water. He took me into his sanctum, and said:

"Look here, young gentleman, you will go to the dogs if you drink brandy-and-water at this time of day, and under twenty years of age, too; and I don't mean you to go to the dogs." And then he told me that he never drank before dinner, and never had a glass of anything in the bar unless his niece was there and took the money; "for," he said, "whether the money comes back into a man's pocket again or not, the act of taking his money out and paying for his drink makes him think twice; and many a time I

say to myself, 'Spring, you worked hard for that money; keep it in your pocket.'"

If Spring's lectures about card-playing, gambling, and other evils could all be remembered, they would do young England good in these days, when so many foolish boys who get afloat in the world are ruining themselves with brandy-and-soda, pool-playing and betting; and I feel certain that I owe it to Tom Spring's advice that I hardly ever won or lost a sovereign at cards or in betting in my life.

"Well, governor," I said to him sometimes, "why do you bet yourself?"

Spring used to shake his head and say, "You mind what the parson said—'You do as I say; don't do what *I do*.' The fact is that when I used to fight I carried hundreds and thousands of other people's money; and when I had it, I used to put on some of my own; and I suppose what is bred in the bone must come out in the flesh. And then, I am very fond of a horse, and I do like to back my fancy sometimes, and to back a man, too, when he is a good one."

"Now tell me about fighting and training, and what your experience was."

"Well, young gentleman, now I will tell you all about it. Training was very hard work, unless you had the luck to have a very cheerful trainer. The first feeling of having nothing to do and a good job in hand was very pleasant, particularly when you got over the stage when a man did not know what thirst was, and health and strength were coming every day; but the hard work was when you felt fit to fight twenty men, and the day was two or three weeks off; and then sometimes I could see my trainer was fidgety, and I fancied that my backers might be fidgety too, and I would get suspicious, and would think they were keeping my friends away from me, or that too many people came to see me, and were writing about me in the papers;

in fact, it was a terrible trial of temper and patience; and when the time really did come, and I threw my hat into the ring, and saw my colours tied to the stakes, it seemed like taking a ton weight off my mind, and I would not have changed places with the King of England."

"Well, can you remember the rounds now, as I can remember hits and catches of cricket matches years ago?"

"Most of them; for, you see, when a man fights he sees nothing of the crowd round him, but his whole attention is on his opponent's face: and thinking over fights, I can see now when I missed finishing a man off, or when I was open, and he never took advantage of it. Now about the pain. A heavy body blow or a bad fall must always tell, and hands will suffer; but the head blows weren't much at the time, when a man's in training and his blood's up, except, of course, behind the ear or parts like that, any more than a hard blow on the leg, which would make a man dance for a week in cold blood, hurts a cricketer in the summer. You may depend upon it that the greatest pain to a good man is to find that he has lost, and that they have given in for him. A man feels down and done for. All his trouble is thrown away, and he fancies that he may have lost his friends too; but if he happens to win, no matter how much he may have been punished, he feels fit to jump over the moon."

"Well, now, what do you think of the Ring now? Is it better or worse?"

"What I think of it now is this. London is larger and more accessible than it used to be. There always were black sheep in the Ring, and now there are more black sheep than there were. Lots of men manage to get a fight or so, and call themselves fighting men, and set up low ginshops and make small matches, when "win, tie, or wrangle," seems to be the motto. Mr. Jackson was trusted by the

highest in the land to arrange what we called 'Prize Battles' when I first began, and any fight with a lot of noblemen behind Mr. Jackson was pretty sure to be square, and if a young man really could fight, and did not show the white feather, he might make his way if he took care what company he went into; but if he was ever seen in company with blacklegs, he was marked.

"The worst of the Ring was that, when a man had a house and wanted to make money quickly, he would keep a kind of raree-shop, and sell any poison to anyone who would come and drink it, and then he generally went into the trap himself, and drank himself out; and lost his licence, and ended worse than he began. The grand secret is to keep a good name, and keep your friends. Why, all kind of gentlemen come in here at Derby time or Cattle Show week, and those times—sometimes a lord, or a baronet, or old country gentlemen who saw me fight my early battles perhaps, many of them twenty years older than I am,—and they treat me like a man, and come for old acquaintance sake; but I don't care for your swaggering betting men, half gentlemen, half, or more than half, rogues. Some of the sporting publicans will let any one of these fellows pat them on the back, and call them 'Bill,' or 'Jack,' or 'Tom,' and think that their sixpennyworth of brandy-and-water is a great consideration. I wouldn't give sixpence for the whole gang. This is my house, and I am landlord, and I choose my own company."

I once saw Spring settle a snob, and I once saw him settle a bully. The first occasion was when a short, stout, brandy-and-water-faced, dirty-nailed, hot-handed cad, with a sky-blue satin neckcloth, with a waterfall to ditto, illuminated with a large pin, the device of which was a pair of silver spurs, and wearing no collar, came in, and, holding out his black hand, on the little finger of which glistened a

diamond ring, exclaimed, "Tom, how are you, old fellow? How am I to go to Chatham races and the fight too on the same day?" The man winked, as much as to say, "Look, my fine fellows, what a sportsman I am."

Spring put his hands quietly behind his back, and answered, "When did you ever know me well enough to call me 'Tom?'"

It was a floorer. The man had never seen him before in any private company. The look which Spring gave him settled him, and he walked quickly out, muttering, and got into a flash dog-cart and vanished.

The other occasion was when a drunken soldier, one of the foot guards, came in and wanted something to drink. Mrs. B., the big niece, told him, very good-humouredly, that he had better go to his barracks, as he had had enough. Whereupon the soldier came out with a dreadful oath, and called her a horrible name.

Spring came out of his parlour with his hair almost on end. I never saw him angry before. He let fly at the soldier in words somewhat warmly, and the soldier said that if Spring had been a younger man, he would have knocked him down; and he began to take his belt off, like a coward. In a much shorter time than I can write three words of this, Spring was round the bar, and there was such a curious conglomeration of a red coat and a black coat twisting round and round down the passage into Holborn, that it had the effect of Chinese fireworks, which are produced by constant change of colour revolving; and, to my delight, I saw Spring's right foot applied as a finisher as he kicked the man into the street. In a minute or two his good-humour returned, and he got his wind again. "There," he said, "I would serve a whole regiment such as that blackguard so, one at a time, or two, if they wished it. That fellow fight! Why, my niece could beat him."

"That I could, uncle," said Mrs. B.; "and should like the job too."

Spring was a very industrious man, and was always busy in the morning, sometimes in a white smock-frock when he was arranging his cellar. He enjoyed life thoroughly, because he never was a cockney. He knew a good horse, or dog, or game-cock, especially a good beast, and was a good judge of farming. I met him at the Cattle Show once, amongst the Herefordshire shorthorns (Herefordshire being his county), and I was immensely pleased to see how his countrymen welcomed him. Top-booted, sturdy farmers and graziers and their daughters crowded round him; and his opinion—particularly as he was originally apprenticed to a butcher—was cordially asked for. He was also very fond of a day's shooting, and I can record what I heard from a country gentleman, who had some very fine preserves in Hampshire, and who let his shooting one year, owing to the absence of his sons, of a trait in Tom Spring's character. My host told me that he was horrified to hear from his head keeper that the gentleman who had hired his shooting had invited Tom Spring and Frank Redmond, the prize-fighters, to shoot; and that he, of course, expected wholesale slaughter, and every kind of poaching. He also told me of his surprise when he received a letter from Tom Spring, apologizing for having accidentally shot a hen-pheasant (hens being held sacred in January), and saying that he had fined himself half a guinea for his mistake, and had paid it to the keeper.

I never shall forget an eccentric picture which I saw once in the old back parlour. I had been away for a few days, and read in the paper that Spring's eldest son had died very suddenly. I at once started for Spring's, and Mrs. B. told me that the governor was sitting alone, and very bad indeed. I went in to see him, and I could not

help laughing, and so did he afterwards; for he was sobbing audibly, with the tears running down his eyes, and *trimming a game-cock for Peter Crawley.*

It was about the year 1845 or 1846, I think, that a new visitor was found at the Castle, as old Tom Cribb paid Spring a very long visit. It was to me like talking to a man from the dead, for if Spring was to me one of the heroes of the past, what was Tom Cribb ?—antediluvian at least. Cribb always occupied an easy-chair near the fire, and I had from his own lips the accounts of his first fights and of his two fights with Molyneaux, the black.

Cribb told me that where he first worked, when a youngster of about eighteen, he was bullied and "set upon"—I think it was in a coal wharf. Anyhow, the oppression became so terrible that he could stand it no longer, and he picked out three of the worst bullies, and matched himself to fight them one after another, and—"God forgive me," said Cribb, who was about sixty-eight when I first knew him, "it was on a Sunday morning; but I did a good Sunday morning's work, and polished them all off at five shillings a man."

Cribb was Spring's second when he fought Langan, and told me all about that fight, as, in the words of *Bell's Life* "Cribb had promised *to pick up Spring.*" Anyone can read the account of Spring and Langan's fights in *Bell's Life* for 1824, and tremendous fights they must have been; but to show how the old school stuck to one another, Spring, a few days after the twentieth anniversary of that fight, gave me a liqueur glass of neat whisky from a keg which Jack Langan—who became a prosperous man in the whisky trade—had sent to him as a token of respect and affection, and in memory of the fight.

Tom Cribb, who had taken his farewell benefit in 1822, appeared once more in the ring in 1845 or 1846, I think,

when in his sixty-eight year, at his own benefit at the Westminster Baths, and put on the gloves with old Tom Oliver. It was a tremendous crush, and of course the old man could not spar, but he just showed us the old guard with his right hand within a few inches of his face about the level of his eyes, and his left hand advanced a little before it, and a few inches higher. It is impossible to exaggerate the wonderful reception which he received from people of all classes.

A host of good men sparred on that evening, Spring included, who looked like a gentleman, in his black trousers, well-polished boots, and close-fitting white jersey About that time there were a great many good men who really could spar, and did spar with a good deal of fire —Owen Swift, Hannan, the two Broomes, Bendigo, Johnny Walker, Hayes, Keen, Phelps, young Reed, Alec Reid, Ben Caunt, and others; Peter Crawley, Spring, Jem Burn, and Jem Ward often appeared amongst the veterans; and there were two of the minor lights who were too delighted to show, anywhere and at all times—"Porky Clark" and "Jacko," who were further removed from the Adonis type than any two bipeds whom I ever saw; but when they did put on the gloves they hammered one another as if their lives depended on it.

The master of the ceremonies at the grand benefits, Jem Turner, the D'Orsay of the ring (as he was called in Bell) was a host in himself, and if he had been educated, would have made a splendid low-comedian, as he had a most astonishing flow of a ready wit.

When Caunt and Bendigo were induced to meet some time after their fight, in which the Nottingham Lambs smashed the ring, and which Caunt lost by a foul blow, according to the referee's decision, there was bad blood between them. The two sparred in fighting costume—I think at Tom Cribb's benefit—and party spirit ran high amongst

the spectators. Jem Turner introduced them: "Ben Caunt, gentlemen; Bendigo, gentlemen; *both* champions of England. No applause, gentlemen. Mum as oysters, gentlemen. If you please—time!" That was something like a set-to, and Bendigo gave Caunt a regular hammering, and hit him just as he pleased.

I went to many benefits with Spring, or by his advice, at the Westminster Baths and elsewhere, but I never but once went to a fight, as it was very expensive work in the first place, and very rough work, as a rule, in the second. The fight I saw was between Keen and Grant, and I met Spring on the ground by appointment, and I certainly would go a hundred miles to-morrow to see it over again. The fight took place in the autumn of 1849, on the borders of Hants and Surrey. Spring told me that it was sure to be a good fight, as he knew that the money was found by men in the Household Brigade, who could afford it, and that strict orders had been given by both sides to take either man away if fairly licked. I can recall every incident of that day as if it occurred yesterday. The arrangements were perfect, and a special "way in" at the railway station was reserved for the excursionists; and the police made no bones about it, but kept on calling out, "This way for the fight, gentlemen; this way for the fight—two pounds and a pound." A poor old lady, a venerable third-classer, made a mistake and thought she was going to Portsmouth, and it was only discovered just in time. I was in a second-class carriage, full of old ring-goers, and was amused to see the enthusiasm with which they recorded past battles. One old gentleman in tops and corduroys, and a large mackintosh and low-crowned hat (who need not have informed us that he was a cowkeeper, as there was an aroma about him which disclosed the fact), who had seen one of the men every morning during his training,

and supplied him with new milk, was very enthusiastic about his performances.

We had a funny scene at Woking, where the train stopped, and a number of the constabulary were drawn up, and announced that they had a warrant to arrest the men, on which Old Bishop, the gun-maker of Bond Street, explained that it was a private train, and that he had come down with a party, "*to consecrate a church.*" After much parleying and delay the police were allowed to get into an empty carriage at the end, and after they had been run out a hundred yards, the train was backed and the bobbies' carriage was uncoupled, and they were left lamenting.

We had good fun with an old farmer in a smock-frock, in whose field the fight took place. I often pass the spot now, near Fleet Pond. It was a meadow three fields off from a lane just below a high embankment: each meadow had a gate opening into the last, which was a *cul-de-sac*. A long parley ensued about what was to be paid, and Spring and Burn wanted to give three pounds.

"Noa," said the farmer; "five pounds is my money."

"But," argued Jem Burn, "you are an old fool, for we shall do your meadows five pounds' worth of good, tramplin g 'em down in the middle of October."

"Very likely you will."

"And you will see the fight for nothing."

"Very likely I shall."

"Now, what is your price?"

Farmer, loq. "Five pounds in money, gentlemen; five pounds' worth of good done to my meadows by stamping 'em down, and a view of the fight for nothing."

"Give the d—— old fool his fiver, Burn," shouted a noble Lord (since deceased) who was in the Life Guards, and who lived almost for sport.

"Ah! just you do; that's what I say about it."

Of course the five-pound note was paid, and as soon as it was, the man said, "Now, who is a fool? I've got all I want, and now I shall let you have a truss or two of straw to make yourselves comfortable in the inner ring, and shall be happy to see you another time."

It was a splendid autumn day, and the scene of the fight was in the heather country, in that part of Surrey which so strongly resembles Scotland and Ireland. It was a pretty sight to see the crowd dotted about. If I remember rightly, the commissariat was highly praised in the sporting papers. All I can say is, that in the company of many Peers, Guardsmen, Members of Parliament, and frequenters of the best London clubs, who like myself were half famished, I made one in consuming what appeared to be half-raw horse, which probably had been killed the day before, eaten with the crummiest new bread and no salt, and washed down with some brandy-and-water, which ought to have killed us all on the spot.

Just before the fight commenced, a startling event occurred. A gentleman on a magnificent hunter, took a hedge and ditch which bounded the field in grand style, and, riding up to the ring-side, he informed a select few of the company, Spring included, that he was a magistrate for Surrey and Hants, and confessed his incapacity, single-handed, to clear the ring, if called upon to act, but he dropped a hint publicly that the county constabulary would be up *at least* in two hours, whereupon the crowd gave him three cheers. The magistrate, who was an ex-guardsman, and formerly a patron of the P.R., lit his cigar, and, as I saw him with my own eyes, gave Lord L. a sovereign for the losing man after the fight. (For particulars of the fight, *vide Bell's Life* October, 1819.) The fight lasted an hour and five minutes, and, barring one or two nasty incidents, which are not worth mentioning, I never enjoyed

a sight much more, it being a wonderful display of science, courage, and endurance, without any brutality. The slighter man tried wrestling with Grant, and got the worst of it; and afterwards, about the sixth or seventh round, by sheer science and timing the blow, knocked Grant clean off his legs. Two things only distressed me: one was the broken-hearted look of the man who lost, when he came to himself; though I saw him eating some bread and meat within half an hour, and surrounded by a number of gentlemen who cheered him up, and told him that he had done his best, and that they would be his friends; and the other was the hideous blasphemy of some of the lower grade of prize-fighters, who got a lift down for nothing for some service which they rendered. As regarded the arrangements, an inner ring ticket secured as comfortable a place as one would find in a cricket ground; but if for no other reason than the outrageous language and blasphemy, which were twenty thousand times worse than I ever heard in a London crowd—even an execution crowd,—the abolition of the Ring was a necessity. I saw one ruffian kneel down and tear the grass with his hands like a wild beast, apparently to assist him in his blasphemy Coming back, there was a scramble for places, and, to my horror, I found myself, with the exception of two officers, in a carriage full of the roughs of the Ring, and I suppose that amongst the whole lot there was not one who could read or write. One incident did amuse me, which was a question asked, not uncivilly, by one of them, of a gentleman, who, speaking about a well-known prize-fighter, remarked that he got into trouble about a *crim. con.* "Beg your pardon, sir," asked one of the prize-fighters, "Who did *crim. con. fight?*" Possibly the question was excusable, as a certain Mr. Con Parker was backed to fight Tass Parker at that very time.

I suppose, if the truth was really told, the Ring once had

its palmy days. Battles were fought under the auspices of the highest in the land, who backed a sport in which many of them would not have minded taking the punishment themselves, as, according to reliable accounts, many "sets to" in Gentleman Jackson's rooms, between amateurs who stood high in the fashionable world for what was called "a bellyful," were next door to a fight. And I know that many of the most mincing dandies, who used to be seen with their lavender kid gloves and curled whiskers and moustaches, sitting in their cabs, were ready and willing at a moment's notice, at a race meeting or elsewhere, to jump off their drags and to tackle a big bully twice their size. I once heard an enthusiastic patron of the ring describing a fight at which he lost his money, in these words as nearly as possible: "I give you my honour, that for nearly twenty minutes my man's left was hardly off the Black's face for a moment, and I doubled my bets, I was so sure, when, to all our surprise, the Black put in an upper cut, which knocked my man out of time, and the sponge was thrown up at once. It was such a splendid upper cut, that, although I lost my money, I could not help admiring the man who gave the blow, and I was so pleased that *I should like to have had it myself.*"

The low sporting (?) publicans appear to have brought the Ring to its lowest ebb, just as they have done with many local metropolitan races. Matches for small stakes, which the backers could not afford to lose, the cheap trips by steamboats into the marsh districts on the Thames, brought together a crowd of costermongers and roughs, who ruled the roost, and some of the scenes enacted caused much public scandal, and the whole thing became a nuisance. Many years ago much sensation was caused by the accounts of the fight between Caunt and Bendigo, when the Nottingham Lambs attended *en masse*, and the spectators were

stripped of watches, money, and jewelry wholesale; and I heard, upon good authority, that an unfortunate foreigner, who wanted to witness *La boxe*, injudiciously went down in a new pair of patent-leather boots, and who, after being relieved of all his valuables, was set down on the ground, and some roughs also took off his boots, and left him to get home in his socks.

The low sporting publican who encouraged little fights, if not a fighting man, was generally a pudding-faced ruffian who could not stand one in the face from a boy, and was much of the same class as those who engaged windows at public executions, and who delighted in cruelty for cruelty's sake.

How Thackeray delighted to portray the low sporting "gent," to wit, the slang young man at his club, who informed you that he had run down to Epsom from Saturday till Monday, to spend Sunday with Hocus, the leg; or Colonel Altamont, who went to the Derby in a four-in-hand from Wheeler's of the Harlequin's Head, with a "slap-up lunch in the boot;" or Sir Francis Clavering, going down in the steamer, and losing his money on Billy Bluck, the cabman, who was killed; or the sporting parson, the Rev. Bute Crawley, who, in enumerating his nephew Rawdon Crawley's vices, exclaimed, "Didn't he cross the fight between Bill Soames and the Cheshire Trump, and thereby lose me forty pounds?"

Sayers and Heenan created as much sensation as the Crimean War or the Prince of Wales's marriage. The *Times*, according to their own statement, sent a reporter to the fight for the first time for thirty-six years, and their report, as a piece of graphic description, will be quoted long after most of us of this generation are under the turf. Their account of that fight opened people's eyes to the reality of prize-fighting. It was not couched in the curious

phraseolgy of ever-pleasant *Bell's Life*, which poor Thackeray described in his dry way as "an admirable paper, with a good deal of erudition in the 'Answers to Correspondents,' but they called a spade a spade, and described how 'Heenan felled Sayers like a bullock.'"

I said I was going to be discursive, so, under "Tom Spring's Back Parlour," I may as well call to mind a few Ring peculiarities, including its literature.

The *Times* stuck to Tom Sayers, and commenced their leader with, "Yesterday all England was determined to break the peace." I have not looked to the file of the *Times* to correct myself, nor have I looked to the files of Bell either, except for two dates, nor shall I, in what I shall quote about that good old sporting paper.

No doubt the Ring had to be humorously treated. It was considered by many, some of the judges and members of the Legislature included, almost a necessary evil. "The Art of Self-defence *v.* The Knife" was a popular cry; and if a fatal accident occurred, the delinquents were dealt with with leniency, and the defence always was that it was a fair fight.

I remember, on one occasion when a man was killed, whose name, I think, was Simmonds, the daily press went in for sensational writing on the brutal spectators who saw the man killed, and "stuck the knife" into *Bell's Life* for advertising the sport. *Bell's Life* had a leader in which they quoted the greater part of the article, and candidly admitted in effect that the spectators were of the lowest and most ruffianly order, almost outside the pale of civilisation; but as they were left by the State in an uneducated and semi-barbarous state, and as the only sermon which could touch them was an exhibition of a fight under the rules of fair-play, which they all understood, and which the majority of them respected, and as they belonged to a

class who habitually got drunk and quarrelled, it was much better for them to be taught to settle their quarrels in a mode which left them with a couple of black eyes and a broken nose, than to be found in the street with a knife stuck in them, and a widow and fatherless children left unsupported. In the same article they stated that, as regards the Ring, if no necessity for it existed, nothing would please them more than to withdraw all note of it from their columns.

Whether it is owing to our frequent intercourse with foreign nations, or from what other cause, I know not, but the knife is much more frequently used now than it ever was.

I knew very intimately, from having passed a long vacation—within the last twenty years—in the parish where he dwelt, a very eminent editor of a very eminent sporting paper, who used not only to attend the great fights, but was often referee. He was one of the most amiable of men, and his three proclivities were gardening, being a very active Vicar's churchwarden, and looking after the parish schools, in which his wife was an indefatigable worker. I remember at church disturbing the devotions of a very excellent lady, who was getting her money ready for the collection at a missionary sermon, by remarking that *Bell's Life* was stakeholder.

But what quaint language they used in Bell, especially in the days of old Vincent Dowling, and, earlier still, in the days of Pierce Egan.

I wish everything would stick to my memory like the quaint sayings of such writers do. Here is a specimen, in the description of a fight between young Dutch Sam and Ned Neale, from Pierce Egan's "Book of Sports":—

"The nobby appearance of Curtis and Holt attracted the admiration of the spectators. They were dressed in new

flannel jackets with side pockets to ditto, in fact they might have been termed 'dress-jackets,' and, in order to make the *tout ensemble* more complete, the tonsor had been put in requisition to decorate their nobs."

Then, in the Answers to Correspondents :—

"Owen Swift did not marry a nun, nor was his father a friar." "Frosty-faced Fogo was his godfather." And *(nihil ad rem* to ring)—"Our correspondent can have his question about the young lady answered at the stage-door of Drury Lane Theatre, but we advise him to go *with his nose well soaped.*"

"Phil Sampson himself again.—We are happy to announce that the gallant Phil Sampson is not, as was reported, knocked out of time: our correspondent had *a way of his daddle* last Sunday"

Then, again, a benefit advertisement :—

"The gallant Jem Davis having lost his wife, begs to announce his benefit for Tuesday next, and hopes his friends will rally round him and *dry up his tears.*"

One more specimen, and I have done. In the account of the fight between Caunt and Bendigo, the reporter (evidently old Vincent Dowling) writes :—

"And now let us record our gratitude to that good Samaritan the Right Rev. Father the Lord Bishop of Bond Street, who took us into his carriage and recruited us with a twopenny buster and a slice of bees-wax, which, with a flash from his pocket pistol, enabled us to survive and tell our tale."

There! I have not seen any of the above in print for, I suppose, five-and-twenty years, nor have I looked at Bell (except for dates), as Bell will testify; but I fancy that any one who refers to the originals will not find me far out. With all its oddity, *Bell's Life* had a strong and lasting influence over the London roughs who attended fights, and an

exposure in their columns of any blackguardism committed by a man who aspired to be a pugilist soon brought him to his senses.

The ring now is dead, *stone dead*, but boxing and good boxing, perhaps never was better. Young Reed, though he must be well middle-aged, I will be bound to say makes twice as much as three-fourths of the clergy of England do, and is as much surrounded by Peers and men of position as Gentleman Jackson ever was, though his rooms are only designed for pure business, and are not a lounge; and many more "professors" are doing well. I very much doubt if people would stomach a regular prize-fight now. The halo which surrounded it is gone. The quaint language and oddities which marked it are things of the past.

It would never have done to have talked about fists, noses, mouths, blood, teeth, and eyes in describing a fight, or to have recorded, in cold blood, how one man knocked out another's teeth and cut his knuckles to the bone. It would read nasty, so it was necessary to say "that the Nobbler dashed in his left mawley and landed on the British Oak's kissing-trap, drawing the claret freely, knocking out two of his front rails; though we doubt if the move was advantageous in the long run, as the Nobbler was evidently in pain with the force of the blow, which cut his knuckles badly, and he was inclined to use his 'right duke' the most till the finish." Strange it was to see the delight which the British rough showed in having this kind of thieves' Latin read to him, and the gravity with which he accepted the account; and if he happened to know a friend who was on duty at a fight, how his dignity rose; and an engagement to go down and to help to guard the commissariat—what Jem Burn called "the belly-timber"—was looked on as something equal to a field-marshal's post.

I firmly believe that in its time the Ring did a great deal

of good, and that the old rough-and-tough school brought to perfection a system of boxing which is not likely to die out. To show how the Ring was backed fifty years ago, it is recorded in the fight between Spring and Langan, on Worcester racecourse, that the magistrates met and determined to allow the fight; and a short time since, a venerable old gentleman told me that when a great fight took place at the back of the "Queen Charlotte," on the London-road, near Andover—a celebrated fighting country near Stockbridge,—a grand exhibition of boxing was held at the Andover Town Hall, under the patronage of the Mayor and Corporation, on the evening before the fight, and that the Mayor, having been driven into granting a warrant for the arrest of the men, lent the promoters of the fight a map of the borough, so that they might fight outside the limits of his jurisdiction, and went, with many of the Corporation and the Town Clerk, in a waggon, with a luncheon, and sat by and saw the fight out. Some few years since I witnessed at St. James's Hall, on the occasion of a benefit for the Soldiers' Female Orphan School, an exhibition (*inter alia*) of boxing between soldiers of the Life Guards and the Blues, which for science and pluck were unsurpassed. A great many ladies were present, and at first they did not know whether to be pleased or not; but, after a round or two, the waving of their handkerchiefs showed what they thought of it.

Fighting was a bad trade on the whole, as a very large number who did rise were wholly uneducated, and got money, and drank themselves out. Poor Tom Sayers was one of the last specimens of that school. It seems but yesterday that I saw a well-known county member and county magistrate collecting sovereigns in a hat for him in the lobby of the House of Commons in 1860, after his fight with Heenan, when, as the story goes, Lord Palmerston

insisted, against the rules, on giving five instead of one and on being remonstrated with for his over-liberality, answered, "Put down one for me, and four for Lord Shaftesbury." I went to the Tottenham Court Road to see Sayers' funeral start, when the crowd was so great that all traffic was stopped. One of the morning papers stated that the only respectable person present was Tom Sayers' dog.

Well, good-bye to Tom Spring. He died in 1851, at the Castle, in Holborn, as he lived, respected. Several testimonials were given to him; one, many years ago, after he beat Langan, by the "lads of the cider country." It was a very handsome silver cup and cover, with a cider cask for a handle; the last, in the year 1846, a very massive silver flagon, which was well lined with sovereigns. I remember one very amusing incident about the Spring testimonial in 1846, which was an announcement that a special extra meeting of the subscribers would be held at the Castle Tavern, Holborn, with a remark in large type, "Mr. T. Spring has kindly consented to take the chair."

Although I had a horror of ordinary "sporting houses" and of "sporting gents," I was in Spring's house for luncheon many hundreds of times; and I suppose that ninety times out of every hundred my refreshment was bread and cheese and a pint of stout. Though, on state occasions, I have been in very good company in his sanctum, when old members of the Pugilistic Club and men of rank, too, gave him a call, and had a bottle of wine, and talked over old times.

I never heard him say an unkind word, or saw him sponge upon any one, or do a shabby trick of any kind; and I look back on his memory with something very near affection, and I believe him to have been a kind true man. The clergyman who attended his death-bed wrote a very

feeling letter in *Bell's Life* about his last moments, and told how he left life as he had lived—an honest Englishman. As a proof of the great respect in which Tom Spring's memory is held, when the trustees of Norwood Cemetery gave notice, thirty years after Spring's death, that his monument at Norwood Cemetery was becoming a dangerous obstruction, for want of repair, it was handsomely restored by public subscription, at a considerable cost—the first subscribers being the present Duke of Beaufort, the late Hon. Robert Grimston, and Sir John Dugdale Ashley, Bart.

Spring's first appearance at the Fives Court must have been some time before the Battle of Waterloo, as the friends of Shaw, the immortal Life Guardsman, had made overtures to back their hero, on his return from Belgium, against Spring. Shaw had fought and beaten Painter in the April preceding the Waterloo campaign; and at that time Spring—who afterwards, in 1818, beat Painter, and was beaten by him (his only defeat) in the same year—had only appeared once in the Prize Ring for a small stake.

BOXING AND ATHLETICS.

It is now very many years ago since, as the *Times* drily remarked, all England was determined that the peace should be broken, and in April, 1860, Sayers stood up for the honour of England against the Benicia boy, Heenan. The records of that fight have been handed down to us by a writer in the *Times*, and it would be "gilding refined gold and painting the lily" to try and add a word to the graphic account which was written by the correspondent who represented that paper. Both combatants are dead, the former having laid down his arms after his gallant contest, and the latter having succumbed to Tom King, the now world-known and much respected ex-champion, whose great proclivity now is to be Champion of England in growing roses.

I am not going to weep over the fallen fortunes of the Ring, and nothing should induce me to go to a fight in the present day, even should such an occurrence take place; because the pugilists are under no control, and, consequently, one would have a right to expect unmitigated ruffianism and brutality.

In the olden days the Pugilistic Club consisted of noblemen and gentlemen of high position; and if a prize-fighter behaved in a dishonest or cowardly manner, they withdrew their support, and he was much in the same position as a

jockey who is under a cloud, and cannot get employed by the leading men of the turf.

All the evidence that I have ever collected tallies exactly with what I have heard from the late Old Tom Cribb, Tom Spring, Alec Keene, and Young Read (rather long in the tooth, perhaps, now, for a young 'un, but alive and well, and teaching the present generation the noble art); which evidence is, that there was a real pleasure in fighting, springing from a love of boxing and an honest struggle for superiority. We all know that there was a black side to it, and so much blackguardism crept in, that gentlemen of position turned their backs on it, and practically it died out.

And it is a matter of immense congratulation that there has arisen from the ashes of the old Ring a love of boxing, which has produced a large school of amateurs, who perhaps are quite equal to a great number of the good men of the past with the gloves. Whether they are hard enough to do it without the gloves is another thing, and is not of much consequence. On the other hand, it is a matter of much regret that the police are encouraged to pry into every contest under the Queensbery rules for a cup. There should be a little discretion allowed. When they know that two low beershop-keepers are putting up two youngsters to box for an endurance match, to see which will last it out, they might put in an appearance, as a man may die of exhaustion quite as much as from an unfortunate blow; and for the sake of a small stake and a few bets, a contest may be prolonged for the good of nobody, and possibly the death of one of the boxers; but when a combat of three rounds only is to take place, to be decided by experts in points of excellence, they had much better stop away. The evidence is always the same, and the police say that from information they received it was

really a prize fight. Great care should be taken that the world is not getting too soft. In former times fighting was as natural to a boy as quarrelling: boys fought at school, boys fought in the street, and men too, for that matter; and say what they will, the knife and kicking are not only coming in, but have come in.

I am not crying down the present in favour of the past; but we are getting more effeminate in many things. Pads and gloves were invented rather more than forty years ago, and capital things they are; but pads now are like mats, and double the size of the leg, and many of the modern school, if the ground is not like a billiard-table, make such a fuss about it, that you would think they were going to storm the Redan. I quite agree with the present cricketers, that it is madness to stand against a man who throws as hard as he can on a rough ground, and calls it bowling. The game is not worth the candle, and it is not cricket, but I think sometimes they cry out before they are hurt, and many of them are much averse to taking the rough with the smooth. It is a great pity now that School Board education is carried to such an extent, that manly sports and gymnastics do not form part of the curriculum. Our friend, the working man, cried out not long ago against drilling, as tending to warfare and military pursuits. I went to an admirable institution, the Polytechnic Young Men's Christian Institute, not long ago; in fact, we had a talk on manly sports that night. It is, I believe, an Eton mission, where young men and youths have the advantage of classes, preliminary instruction in trades, fine arts, and also a good deal of religious instruction—but one great feature is the gymnasium, where every means and appliance are to be found for manly exercise of all kinds, not forgetting the noble art of self-defence.

And now I want to ask this—why are not swimming,

single-stick, and boxing taught in the Board Schools—especially the first? It is a shame to Englishmen that year after year the accidents from drowning are so often fatal. If poor Captain Webb, who lost his life so miserably in Canada, had been taken care of by the Government, and been appointed as swimming inspector to prepare pupil teachers in that art, and if swimming was made part of all English boys' education, it would save hundreds of lives every year. At Eton no boy is allowed to go in a boat until he has passed in swimming; consequently most Eton boys can swim. There should be a swimming bath in every inland town, and in London the parks should be utilized: a few pontoons, with staunchions and screens, would do all that is necessary, and the swimming-baths are ready made; and in county towns there should, as I said, be a swimming bath for the boys, and they should be obliged to learn. Why compel children to be vaccinated, and why not compel them to learn to swim?

The natural propensity for manly sports is shown by the admirable use which young fellows make now of the Saturday Half-holiday, by giving their attention to boating, cricket, football, volunteering, and the like—by which means the idle, debauched, effeminate shopmen of the past, who had not an idea beyond doing the Sunday swell, *à la* the Tittlebat Titmouse family, have disappeared, and seeing how naturally athletics come to those who are above the working classes, surely every opportunity should be given to children of the poor to become active and manly. The energies of the ragged little boys who turn cart-wheels for coppers might be turned in a better direction; and, as I said before, above all things, they should be taught swimming and athletics.

One of the most touching stories ever told was how, when the Goliath was burned in the Thames, the little boys obeyed

discipline to the last in getting their fellows out of the ship, and when the last order was, "Swim for your lives!" overboard they went, and all reached land safely In days of the past, the aspirants to the Ring at prizefighters' benefits consisted often of young gentlemen who "had the keys of the street!" in other words, rough young fellows who slept under the dark arches, or in the markets: many of the costermonger class or their allies, the rough-and-ready school who had to elbow their way through the world from childhood. Coal wharves supplied a good many of them, and so did the river stairs, where the boatmen kept their wherries. I knew all the school pretty well, and I can conscientiously say that rough as many of them were, they were always ready to earn an honest penny, no matter how tough the job might be—I don't mean in boxing, but in their ordinary life,—and they had the keenest sense of justice and of kindness, and the most utter contempt for a flash snob. Moreover, they were very funny in their remarks. "Oh! 'ere's a friend of Prince *H*albert's, gentlemen, just come from Buckingham Palace to say the greens must not be biled too long before supper," was the remark I once heard from one of them to an over-dressed snob, who pushed the speaker out of the way. "I say, governor," another would ask, "I see you a speakin to Mr. Spring; could you ask him to let my mate go on at the beginning; he wants a shower of browns very bad, and has set to at Ben Caunt's and Owen Swift's." "What's his name?" "Cranky Jack, of Billingsgate Market, sir: it's wery clever he is"—introducing me to a young gentleman with a *lignum vitæ* face and very short hair. And if room could be found for Cranky Jack before the great stars appeared, the gratitude of his friends for my putting their "pal" in the way of having his head punched was unbounded.

Well, I will admit it was a very rough school, and some

of the exhibitions of the past hardly suit a city now numbering nearly four millions of inhabitants; but the basis of that school was real English courage, and we cannot have too much of it; and moreover they all had a keen appreciation of the old English rule of "Fair Play."

MY TWO DAYS' SALMON FISHING.

I KNOW all the South and West of Ireland, from frequent visits, and I will call back to memory my first and only two days' salmon fishing. I had been staying at a charming village inn, in an out-of-the-way district on the borders of Lough Corrib, and finding that my time was come to return, had packed up my fishing things sadly, and went for a long evening stroll by the mountain side, for the purpose of taking a farewell of scenes which had grown upon me. I saw a light in my room, and on going in, found a gentleman and lady playing at cards. Moreover, it was not a dry game of "spoil five," as I found the game to be that they were playing. "I blush to see you, sir!" said the male intruder; "but my woife, to whom I introduce you, was taken rather poorly on the *cyar*, and we stopped here for the night, and having no other room, the landlady put us in here, and she has ventured to bring in the groceries, that my woife might have a glass o' punch before going to bed." The speaker was very broad Irish, with a good-humoured eye; so I stopped further apologies, and swore eternal friendship on the spot, ratified there and then by Biddy the maid producing a tumbler and spoon; and Saxon

and Milesian joined in the bowl. In primitive inns manners were primitive too, and the custom was to leave the guest with a large bottle of whisky and the kettle and sugar, and to ask him next morning "how many glasses of punch to charge for;" and as the whisky often possibly "never *pad* the Queen a sixpence," it was good for all parties. My guests were well middle-aged, evidently of the commercial grade, and it was not long before it was dropped incidentally by the lady, "that her brother-in-law had been to a ball at the Castle, and her uncle had been in the militia." She asked for trumps so plainly, that I was obliged to admit, with some blushes, that I had been patted on the head by the late Archbishop of Canterbury when a boy—which was strictly true, by the way, as he confirmed me along with the inhabitants of some five or six adjoining parishes. The lady retired for the night; Biddy put some fresh peat on the fire, and brought in a fresh kettle of boiling water, my guest smoked a little of his cigar at intervals—your well-seasoned Irishman who likes the national beverage is generally too busy with the groceries to smoke much,—and I sat me down quietly to a well coloured Irish short clay. We spoke in a subdued tone, as the rooms were small and the walls thin, and we did not wish to disturb the lady fair; in fact, the walls were so thin that (without lifting the veil which screened the privacy of my lady's chamber), we could hear the whistling of a stout staylace through the eyelet-holes, in the air, and eventually the fall of a heavy pair of stays; and I am bound to record that we kept a respectful silence while the representative of the fair sex, with a fine brogue, said her prayers, which were very audible—a practice much to be commended, —and to our mutual joy a good wholesome family snore eventually proclaimed that the night was our own.

We got friendly and confidential, and my guest remarked,

"Did ye ever catch a salmon, now?" I admitted my innocence of that feat, remarking that the cost of salmon fishing was so enormous, and the chances of good sport so vague, that the game was not worth the candle, and it was not worth while to pay a pound for a licence, and nearly four pounds for a week's ticket. "Give me your hand, my boy; stop where I am going," naming the place, "and I will give ye two days' salmon fishing for nothing; it shall only cost ye a trifle for the fisherman, and a man with a boat, and a relation of my woife's (our house is full), will take ye in as cheap as any inn, and much more comfortable. As to a licence, there is no fear, as I am officially connected with the fishery, and shall hear first of any chance of a prosecution; and if I hear that anyone is moving, off ye go to England, my boy." You will observe that he was getting friendly and familiar. As the bottle got lighter, and my guest pulled two strokes to my one, a tear came in his eye, and he called me "Charles," or, as he pronounced it, "Chorlus," and told me I resembled an only son who died young; and very much in the small hours he joined the stout fairy whose snoring was like the noise of a well-regulated gong.

It was with no small pleasure that I listened to my new acquaintance of the previous evening, when he told me that we should reach our destination before six o'clock in the day, and that I should have a try for a salmon as soon as we arrived. I was "struck of a heap" as the vulgar saying is. One of the large public cars took us leisurely along through charming scenery, and I was landed at my journey's end at a comfortable house close to a large weir, and saw at first sight that my new home held out every promise of enjoyment—and the river *said* "salmon." The usual inquisitive crowd of idlers, mostly bare-footed, forming a picturesque group, stood round the car, and my mentor singling out a bright-eyed, rough-headed little

urchin, said, "Go at *onst*, Larry, to Phil Morris, and bid him come quick with his rod, and hook a salmon for an English gintleman; and when you are back, and say he is coming, I will give you a penny."

Pending the messenger's return, I was pondering in my own mind whether it was consistent with my dignity to have a salmon hooked for me, but on second thoughts I felt confident that I never could manage it myself, before a crowd of strangers, with a large two-handed rod and heavy tackle which was quite new to me. Before I was out of my reverie the boy returned, followed shortly after by Phil Morris, a well-known professional fisherman; and his rod and tackle somewhat astonished me. The rod, a weather-beaten, rough-looking affair, consisted of two pieces only, utterly innocent of paint or varnish, about 17 feet in length when spliced together with string. At the end of the butt two holes were drilled, through which a rough winch was bolted, and there were a few rings for the line to run through.

"Do you think you will get a salmon to-night?" I asked.

"Get a salmon, yer honour? Why, there are as many salmons in them pools as there are rogues at the Curragh on a race day, and I wish the master and his good lady here and all of us were as shure of going to glory and no questions asked, as I am to stick a salmon now." And going to a little distance, where there was plenty of elbow room, he let out what seemed to me a very long line, and made a cast or two, the heavy two-handed rod looking like a feather in his hand, and the long heavy line paying out like a slippery snake uncoiling itself, and the flies falling on the water like gossamer. I could have watched the man for hours, for he was a thorough master of his art; and whilst I watched I heard a shout; "I've got one, sir, look out," and a sheet of silver shot up in the air and came down with a splash, and

then shot up again, and the line went whizzing through the rings. "Bide a while, sir, till I steady him for ye;" and Phil Morris, after letting the salmon run, wound in the slack till he had him well in hand, and made him feel the weight of the line, the fish ploughing up stream about a quarter of a mile an hour, and then he gave me the rod and said, "Catch hold, sir, now you've got your first salmon on, and never mind if you lose him. I'll get you another."

And I said to myself, "Now I've got my first salmon on, and if I lose him he'll get me another," and then I thought, "Well, the tackle is heavier and the fish is bigger than what I am accustomed to, but it feels like playing a trout, as far as I can see, and the water is heavy and no piles: by Jove! I think I *shall* land him." By degrees I found my salmon tiring, after some minutes, and I had recovered a good deal of line, and could see him, for he was nearly on the top of the water, and he began to move quicker, and I could guide him. The fear I had was of his jumping again, and my holding too tight. I felt the perspiration standing in beads on my face, and my hands were cramped. And then for the first time Phil Morris spoke, almost in a whisper, "Go on as you are, sir, aisy, and try and get him alongside that wood-work, fifteen yards ahead, and I'll be handy with the gaff; and for the Lord's sake, when he smashes at the line with his tail, keep the top of your rod well over him, and the line as tight as you can convaniently without jerking him." Every word fell on my ear, and I tried to follow the advice, and played him with a steady give-and-take, and suddenly I felt the excitement of a mad fish rushing towards the side, plunging downwards and smashing with his tail, and I thought all was over, when the strain on the line slackened, and with a wild hurroo! my trusty fisherman laid him on the grass. I was so excited with the fish that I did not see the man (who was lying on

his face below the high bank on which I was standing) gaff him. Aspen leaves "were fools to me," *quâ* shaking, for I felt almost drunk with excitement. "No more fishing to-night, Phil Morris," I said, "or I shall go mad," as he poured a little whisky into the salmon's mouth, *more Hibernico*, before wetting him ourselves, which we all did. It was autumn, and he was a red salmon, but he was a real salmon, and weighed over nine pounds, and I was *very* happy. Acting on my request, Phil Morris got the crowd to disperse, and we were left alone, and I explained to him that I had two days' salmon fishing before me, and I would take care of him if he would teach me to throw a line with a two-handed rod; and when we were alone I got him to take the flies off, and I kept on till I felt pretty certain that I was fairly safe against whipping out my own eye or anyone else's: and we parted for the night with a mutual promise to meet the next morning at six o'clock. It was dark when I got to my lodgings, and I found my friend, to whom I was indebted for so much pleasure, there before me. I never saw a man more pleased, for, like all big-hearted men, his pleasure was in pleasing others. "Bedad, sir," he said, "I went away when I saw you with the rod, for I said to myself, his heart will break if he loses the fish, and I would not like to see it." There was no difficulty about it; it was all plain sailing; the fish was well hooked, there were no rocks or piles, and Phil Morris knew exactly when to bring him in, and how to gaff him. But how happy it made us all, simply because we all loved real sport. Need it be said that a good tea, and some eggs and bacon and buttered toast *galore* were acceptable, and that a quiet tumbler of punch, or perhaps two, were drunk, but no small hours were indulged in, as I was due at six o'clock next morning by the river, and I fell asleep to the music of the water rushing over the weir. The catching of one fish is

much like the catching of another. Suffice it to say that for the two days succeeding the taking of my first salmon I worked hard for fourteen hours a day, from six till eight o'clock each day, taking on Phil Morris and a man with a boat, and Larry with the gaff. Of course I missed lots of fish, for I would not let anyone touch my rod, and it took some time to get into the knack of striking accurately, and not too soon; but somehow or another, I managed unaided to hook and land five salmon in the two days, and on the last day—having waded without waterproofs for some hours—when I got home I felt downright beaten, and could just keep my eyes open to eat a mutton chop and drink a large glass of hot punch; and, getting under two or three extra blankets at nine o'clock on Saturday night, I slept where I fell, without moving, till half-past one on Sunday afternoon. I believe my five salmon cost me about a sovereign apiece, after Phil Morris, and the boat, and the boy with the gaff, and my lodging, and the bill for refreshments, and flies were all paid; but one of the best of Irish fishermen (I need hardly say that Phil Morris is not his real name) I ever saw, tried his very hardest to teach me to throw a salmon line, and if I had the chance again I think I could do it well enough for my own amusement; but I do not profess to know more of salmon fishing than I learnt in my two days' experience, and I look back on that visit as one of the brightest eras of my life.

My chance acquaintance overpaid me twenty times for the loan of my private room, by giving me the fishing, and I made him accessory after the act to breaking the laws of his country, he being a member of the Salmon Fisheries Board. It occurred thus. On Sunday evening I told Phil Morris I must have a dish of salmon-parr for dinner, and he slipped down to a quiet spot and got me a couple of dozen about the size of large smelts. The penalty, I be-

lieve, is forty shillings for every one found in your possession. I got over my kind landlady's scruples, and persuaded her to let me have them fried in batter, and in the middle of dinner in walked my Irish friend. "Have some Kentish smelts," I said to him; "came this morning by post; sit down and join me."

He winked, and sat down. "Holy Moses!" he exclaimed; "they are salmon-parr; you are in for two pounds apiece."

"And you are in for it too, my boy, for you have eaten three already."

"Ah! well, let us put them all out of sight, then. Give me two or three more, for they are food for the Pope himself."

The next day I left my salmon haunts, and went back with much content to what trout fishing I came across. It is childish to say that a man who had once caught a salmon would never care for anything else. In my rambles I came across an Irish fair in a picturesque village on the seashore.

"I shall give a halfpenny to the best boy," I said to a group of bare-footed, shock-headed, bright-eyed little Irish urchins who were standing in a ring round "the English Gintleman," who was sitting on the stump of an old tree outside "Pat Murphy's Grocery and Entertainment," in the little Irish village, where he was the only stranger in the place. I was that stranger. "I am the best boy, sir," yelled the little crowd, in chorus, and each sang his own virtues lustily. "But stop, my little men," I continued; "I am going to give a penny to the worst boy." The chorus turned round and proclaimed the wickedness of their neighbours. "That boy helped beat his uncle when they got him down at the fair," said one. "That boy was sent to Mass with twopence for the priest's dues, and only

put a penny in the bag," said another, "and kept the other himself." "And that boy, sir," exclaimed an impudent little rascal, winking at a good-natured police-constable who was standing by, "put the *pollice* off the scent when they were after the whisky stills, and the poor constables had nothing to eat, and slept in the mountains and caught nobody." And so they went on blackening one another, in hopes that the capital might be safely landed by one of the party, for the good of the commonwealth. So I referred the question to the police-constable, who decided that they were all such bad boys that they were all *worst*, and giving them the benefit of the doubt, they received a penny apiece, which gave general satisfaction.

Did you ever go to an Irish fair? I mean a real country fair, where you see all classes—county gentlemen, farmers, small squireens, peasants, and some of the prettiest girls in the world. You don't see the latter at their best, as they make it a point to come to fairs in shoes and stockings, and you miss the wonderfully graceful carriage which marks them when they walk barefooted with a pail of milk or a basket on their heads.

I was at a fair on the sea-shore early in the day, in time to see the crowd assemble, and made the acquaintance of a handsome old dame who was sitting before a table, on which, *mirabile dictu*, was a clean cloth—for that article is less common in Ireland than with us at home—and upon it a lot of sheep's tongues and biscuits. "Glory be to God, it's a fine day, yur honour," said the old lady, taking her pipe out of her mouth, "have a ship's tongue and a cracker to keep ye in good humour, and if ye wish it I'll get ye a a drain o' punch from Dan Finnigan's booth, and take care of your rod and your basket when ye go into the fair, and (looking into the basket) them mountain trout will just do for a poor ould woman's supper when she gets home, and

you're sure to catch some more when the sun is sinking, and your fishing book bulges out your pocket—let me take that, too, and make room for the fairings ye'll be buying."

I complied with the old lady's proposition, barring the fishing book. "No, mother, not the fishing book, for tackle is the only thing the Irish will steal."

"True for ye, there; the boys *will* steal it or coax the English gintlemen out of it—and, there now—give me a bit for my son, for he is a clever boy with the trout." And so I sat down and had two or three tongues and crackers, and even a second sip of Dan Finnigan's whisky, for I had walked a long way and had had nothing but a tumbler of milk and whisky very early in the morning; which, by-the-bye, in default of breakfast, will carry one on for three or four hours.

It was a pretty sight seeing the people arrive on cars and donkey carts, or strolling down the hill-side on foot, the girls with their red or blue cloaks and hoods or shawls, artfully put on, the older women in clean white caps, and the squireens with wonderful shirt collars, and frieze coats with metal buttons. Some had a fowl or a duck under each arm, others a basket of eggs or butter, or jars of honey, and not a few drove a pig before them, or a cow or horse of no great pretensions, or a donkey. I watched the bartering, and observed that a good donkey was the greatest subject for competition, and though I did not catch the figures, the biddings went on for a long time over each donkey sale. The cattle and sheep and horses were sold some little way from the pleasure fair, and a substantial class of farmers and county gentlemen, and more than one London horse dealer whom I recognised, were assembled. But that was dull business.

My old lady called me to her as I was strolling back from the cattle sale. "Come here, sir; here's the prettiest Irish girl

in Connaught, the blacksmith's daughter." And by Jove she *did* speak the truth. Aye, indeed! and he's worth a dale of money, a hunther they say, when her ould father goes; and he was bad last Christmas, and Father Regan made his sowl."

"Yes," remarked a bystander, "and the punch brought him to life again."

"Get out, Mick, and don't be listening to my discourse; 'tisn't you that's the boy she will be having—there's better nor you in the barony—and (to the girl) come here, Mary, and I'll tell you a sacret."

"And what's that, mother?" as she called the ould woman.

"I tould the English gintleman that you are the prettiest girl in the Connaught, and I tell ye something else; there's Phelim, not a hundhred yards from ye now —" And she spoke the truth, for Phelim, a fine young fellow, came towards her, blushing very much, and catching sight of me (for the story told itself) looked as if he would have smashed me if he could, under an erroneous suspicion of jealousy, thinking that I had spoken to her perhaps. It *was* a case, and from the happy expression on her face and on her lover's, I was certain that the green-eyed monster was quelled. I wish a few London 'Arries would go over to an Irish fair and make some of their witty (?) remarks to an Irish peasant girl or two; they would get what they deserve so much.

Turning from love to theatricals, I have seen something pretty good at old Greenwich Fair in the past, with Wicked Barons, injured innocence, and blue fire and ghosts; but commend me to the same thing at a rural Irish Fair. Upon my word, I think they took the drama for reality, for when the ghost of the bleeding nun appeared to the virtuous character, and pointing, said, "Ye'll find my bloody corse

yonder," one gentleman remarked, "I'll go bail it's in the cupboard." "Hould yer tongue, you fool," said his friend, "it will be buried under the stairs." A horrible vision crossed my mind—had the speaker ever had practical experience with the body of an agent? However, when the Wicked Baron is led to the fatal corner, and the virtuous character runs his sword through him, the delight of the audience was enormous, and there were loud cries of "Kill him again! Kill him again!" But the Corpse and Ghost and the Baron and the virtuous character contented themselves with bowing to the audience.

Then followed something of a pantomime; but a screw was loose evidently, and there was a cry of "Where's the merriman? Where's the Jack Pudding?" whereon the manager, who evidently was well known to his audience, came forward and said in a kind of stage whisper, "Ladies and gintlemen, I never like to disappoint my friends, and I'll tell ye the truth—he's been to his aunt's funeral, and is a little overcome with excitement." Which apology was received with acclamation. Only fancy an Irish clown in liquor!

The old woman prophesied rightly about the trout, for as I strolled home in the evening, when the sun was sinking the fish were mad with glory, and I brought home enough for my supper and the people at my inn too. And over my evening's pipe and a tumbler of punch my thoughts went back to the blacksmith's daughter, and I drank to her happiness.

I don't think I shall ever re-visit my old haunts. There is hardly a spot in the fairy land which I have so often trod that has not been the scene of misery, and outrage, and murder since I saw it last, and I prefer to keep in my mind the pleasant visions of the past, and my recollection of the people as they were when I was so happy amongst

them, and not run the risk of mixing with those whose lives have been embittered, and affections estranged from English sportsmen by wicked and designing men. As I meet some of these agitating scoundrels, most of whom I know by sight, day by day in London, I feel as if I was meeting the father of mischief himself, and look down expecting to see the cloven hoof. I like to remember the old-fashioned greeting, "You're welcome, anyhow," and a rough answer from an Irish peasant *now* would grate terribly on my ear. The drawback to Irish tackle is that their gut is not so fine or pliable as ours, and I rejoiced Phil Morris's heart by giving him two or three of Holroyd's finest-drawn gut collars, and a few of the "Strange's fancy" Wandle flies, which I have found "death on trout" in mountain streams in Ireland and Scotland.

NOTE.—My fishing was in Galway river, just below the weir at Lough Corrib. My fisherman was young George Brown, but I did not put his name at the time, as there were two George Browns, senior and junior, and near relatives; and there was much jealousy between them, the friends of one declaring that the other was of no use. My John Brown was the best fisherman I ever saw. The salmon, *crede* the late Frank Buckland, swarm in Galway river.

ABOUT SEVERAL MEN WHO WENT A-ANGLING.

On Valentine's Day hundreds of housemaids will look up the area palings, expecting a missive from Postman X, and many a boarding-school miss will try to square the servants so as to prevent the old lady abbess of the boarding school from cutting off some amatory correspondence from lovesick boys.

You, who have the run of trout streams in the warmest parts of the West of England, a sou'-west wind, a keeper waiting for you with all fishing paraphernalia, so as to enable you to welcome your first trout as your valentine on February the 14th. This occurred at Broxburn some twenty-eight years ago, and sure I was there.

Have to wait for thirteen days from the day you read this until you feel the top of your rod bend down almost to your knuckles with exactly the same delightful sensation as a cricketer feels when he meets the first ball of the season, and knowing that it is six inches off his wickets, he makes "*the* cut," which he has dreamt of all through the winter, and feels that the hit has come well off.

Fancy again, Lady fisheresses (I appeal to good *old* Tory

young ladies who land big salmon every autumn in or about the Gordon-Richmond estates in Scotland), how much jollier it is to see the monarch of the stream on the grass than to "rink" at Prince's, or to be carried round Belgravian drawing-rooms, half dead and quite knocked up, in the mazy waltz. Not that Prince's is a bad place by any means, nor ballrooms either.

Now, is not this a romantic opening? I am going to talk about cockney fishing twenty years ago from this date.

Dramatis personæ. Myself No. 1: An overworked official in those days; and I only wish my friend "the working man" could be induced to do what I did then at my pay, and would put his soul into it as I did, at the risk of heart and brains.

No. 2. A poor Clerkenwell watchmaker, accompanied by a sickly-looking little boy on a crutch and a kitten in a basket. The poor little fellow loved the fresh air much, but he loved his kitten more.

No. 3. Three jolly young farmers who took it into their heads to study the gentle art.

No. 4. A sour, bumptious fellow, who knew every art of livebait fishing for jack, which only means "ledgering," with a detective to watch the float and to haul it in when the jack has gorged the bait, after ten minutes. These coves are not within the pale of the "Fishing Church."

Twenty years ago work was harder, and no Saturday half-holiday existed, and those who worked with their brains had to work a fair six days, from nine o'clock till six or seven, and very often till two or three in the morning, Saturdays included; and many, like myself, who had been born and bred in the country, and knew and loved most sports, would be as pleased, for want of better sport, to cut out a mouse on a hillside, or catch minnows or gudgeons, than do nothing. Hence it occurred to me that it was

better to run down to a place twenty miles from London, more or less, which Izaak Walton once trod, for the purpose of quiet and enjoyment in meadows which were sacred to those who paid for privacy and seclusion, than to do nothing.

According to the accounts direct from the fishery, the fishing was A 1. The real truth was that, under very special seasons, and at special times, a ten or even a fifteen pound pike *might* be caught, but in ordinary times perch and roach and jack of no great size ruled the market.

Well, I went a fishing; and having the run of the back waters, and by working all day, I had a little incidental sport of no great moment, but every bit of which lifted a ton weight off my mind; and I spent more time chatting with those who were fishing than I spent in my own sport; so exit No. 1 of the *dramatis personæ*.

Enter No. 2. The poor Clerkenwell clockmaker and the little boy with the crutch and the kitten.

No. 1 was taking stock of the frequenters of the water, and "fell into discourse," as Mr. Pepys would have said, with No. 2, and he learnt that No. 2 and his little boy and the kitten had started on foot, on Saturday afternoon, from Clerkenwell, and had made an easy ten miles; my little friend with a crutch being "a rare game one to peg along," according to his father's account, and had slept at a friend's house some eight miles from the fishery, and had finished the journey that morning early. Good heavens, little Bethel! could this honest clockmaker have been fishing on a Sunday?

The little fellow was shouting with delight at butterflies and dragon-flies, and when he saw a kingfisher for the first time he went quite mad, and told the kitten all about.

Well, I sat and looked at the clockmaker for a long time, and saw *his* fishing. He had a very long bamboo rod which could readily be pulled to pieces, for the purpose of

landing his fish, and was watching an almost invisible porcupine quill float which sailed about in a little fresh-water sea, and I would defy any one but a clockmaker to mark a bob of that float; but as sure as the float sunk a hundreth part of an inch he struck; and when a little roach, about five to a pound, came in, the little boy shouted and told the kitten again.

I thought to myself, "If that poor fellow had the run of a fine river, well preserved, with an old keeper's instructions and good tackle, wouldn't he 'wipe the eye' of many a salmon-fisher," for I never saw a keener sportsman or a man with a quicker hand and eye.

No. 2's refreshments were very scanty, and it was in my power to give them a banquet at the cost of half-a-crown; but such a nature's gentleman was the poor clockmaker, and so happy was he with his harmless enjoyment, that if I had tendered pecuniary assistance he would have looked on me as a snob.

Some tobacco and a pull at my flask was all I dared offer: could I offer more to a man who knew Izaak Walton by heart? In desultory cross-examination I found, to my great joy, that the party were going home by train.

I would have given four times its value to have put a crown into his hand, but I knew the man's mind: he was as independent as I was, and felt it.

Enter No. 3. The party of three jolly young farmers, rigged out with new tackle, new bait cans, gaiters, fishing boots, and all sorts of things advertised by fishing shops. There was no difficulty in making their acquaintance. They made mine. They had cold chicken, tongue, ham, bottled beer, gin, whisky, rum, and tobacco in all varieties, and were in riotous spirits.

Their story came out in a moment. One of their party professed to be a fisherman, and had enticed all the others

to commence the noble art; and, at considerable expense, they had bought the necessary tackle, and the result was "nil."

I travelled on, and came to No. 4, the sulky ledger-fisher. He was morose and taciturn, and said he had only caught one fish—no sport to speak of.

"What weight?"

"Oh! only about fifteen pounds!"

'Twas true he had got it, for I saw it.

He never asked me to have any lunch. On the contrary, he evidently wished me at the place where little Bethel would have sent him for fishing on a Sunday.

And now, why did I fish on a Sunday?—for I don't think I ever did so before, and (bar one, under similar circumstances) I don't think I shall ever do so again. It is all very well for poor clockmakers who live in garrets; but I think a week-day better under ordinary circumstances.

I will tell you how it came about. I went to the doctor's, half dead, on Saturday morning, and he said, "If you don't go away at once for forty-eight hours into the green fields, and lie on your back, and do nothing, I won't answer for you; for your brain is overworked. No church, mind—no reading—be idle." So I went to a little fishing inn, the only place I knew where I could be sure to be out of a crowd, as the fishing meadows were sacred; and hence I met my companions.

Now to kill off the *dramatis personæ*. No. 2, the clock-maker's party, went home by train, and I had the opportunity of slipping in a pot of real good ale into my bill, and could tender my friend the stirrup-cup without any appearance of pride,—and, by the way, he put his head into the pot—it was clear he relished it.

No. 3, the jolly farmers' party, sent me an invitation to join them in their private rooms. They were in very good

trim—in other words, were in great mirth,—though not intoxicated, by any means. Around them were many bottles. On the table was a jack, or "jackikin," of about seven or eight ounces in weight, and I was requested to act as coroner whilst they held an inquest over the deceased; which office I readily accepted, and a verdict was returned of "found drowned," which verdict was duly wetted by the gentlemen of the jury.

The way they chaffed one of their companions, who had induced them to come a-fishing, was a caution; but as we fell into discourse (again quoting Mr. Pepys), I told them that if they really wanted to learn anything about fishing, a Thames fisherman, for a sovereign, would give them enough preliminary instruction to enable them to follow out the art themselves; and they concluded, as a Yankee would say, to go somewhere where they could be well posted up in the gentle art.

And here let me digress for a moment, and say a word to young England, if he wants to learn fishing. The genial spirit of Izaak Walton, who taught his "scholar" all the rudiments of fishing, has descended on his disciples; and there is not a fisherman in England worth his salt who is not always ready and willing to communicate the mysteries of the gentle art to a tyro.

Now for No. 4—the morose man who landed the 15-pounder. With the aid of the landlord we soon found out his value. He was a pot-hunter, belonging to one or two fishing clubs, and fishing for prizes. His game was, to get information about the water, and as to when and where a good fish was on the feed, and to drop down with tackle which would tow a barge, and with two rods out, and any amount of live bait, and to go "ledgering." We heard quite enough about No. 4's sport, and he swaggered and blustered about it when he came in, and wrote off to the sporting

papers on the subject, and then gave himself up to painting his nose with grog.

So No. 1 (that's myself) and No. 3 (that's the three farmers) talked over No. 2 (the clockmaker and his little party), and we voted them the best of the best, and we voted No. 4 a snob. Then the No. 3 party whispered together; and one of them almost died of convulsions, and said to me (that's No. 1), "You *will* hear of a lark." And so we separated for the night.

Izaak Walton talked of inns where the beds smelt of lavender, and ballads hung on the wall. My bed was a *very* lively bed indeed, and sleep came not. Whilst I was *blessing* (?) the fleas, and in utter despair, I heard a hubbub which might have awakened the dead. There was much violent language, and, on opening my door, I saw a madman rushing about the passage in a very short night-shirt; and from adjoining bedrooms, occupied by No. 3, I heard shrieks of merriment. The madman was No. 4.

No. 4 rushed at me like a tiger.

"Did *you* do it, sir?"

"Do *what?*" I asked.

"Did *you* put the big jack in my bed, sir?"

I thought I must have exploded right off: I told him, in remarkably plain words—I may say, in *very* remarkably plain words—to go to bed, and not kick up such a row; and shut the door in his face.

Query? Could No. 3 have done such a wicked thing as to put the jack into No. 4's bed? Somebody did it.

THE PRIDE OF OUR VILLAGE.

THERE is between the hills in a south-eastern English county one of the prettiest villages in England. On one side for a distance of several miles there is a line of well-wooded heights, and on the other side some picturesque down-country Through the valley runs a river, and on the rising knoll stands a village church just above the bridge, over the stream, and near the church are the great house and deer park. It is a very little village, containing some three hundred inhabitants, and was, and probably now is, a very primitive place in its way. There was no public-house or beershop in that village; the whole place, barring the vicarage, belonged to the squire, who, when a railway first made its appearance, bargained that no station should be placed anywhere nearer than two miles and a half, and who obstinately refused to every builder who applied for a plot of land the slightest concession to erect any house upon his estate. There were no poor to speak of, and as every labourer was employed, we had no poachers, and so kept the even tenor of our way, content with one service on the Sunday morning or afternoon alternately, for our spirtual wants. We were orthodox withal, for on feasts

and festivals, when the Athanasian Creed was appointed to be read, the old clerk would say to the Vicar, "If you please, sir, we have "*Hannonias*" creed to-day." The Ranters once tried to preach on the green, and had there been any stocks in the parish, no doubt they would have found themselves in them; but as there were no stocks they were simply ordered to move on, and they had the sense to do so, the villagers being conservative, and the river handy.

Our village was for some twelve months one of the most celebrated in England, for the big house and the park being let by the squire to a nobleman who was sportingly inclined, we all woke up with a new excitement in the shape of racing stables in our parish. People shook their heads and prophesied the ruin of us all; but a reaction soon took place. The trainer and a swarm of nice little boys with close-cut hair and shining faces made quite a show in our village church with their smart liveries, and looked as if butter would not melt in their mouths, and the new community of grooms, rough-riders, and stable-boys settled down quite pleasantly amongst us, and people found that a good deal of money was circulated, and that we grew none the wickeder. There was no Sunday training, no four-in-hands came from the cavalry barracks on Sunday afternoons (as the Mawworms all said there would be), and the park and the racing stables were as quiet on a Sunday as any other part of the village; and our new Squire's purse was never closed to any appeal from the Vicar, and we never saw or heard anything of the evils of racing, if such there be. In the autumn our enthusiasm reached its highest pitch, for the next year's Derby favourite became one of our parishioners. High and low, rich and poor, thought and dreamt of nothing else but the coming race in the spring.

"La! miss," said our oldest inhabitant, a venerable old

woman of nearly ninety, who inhabited the almshouse—whose first husband was hung for robbing the mail, and also hung in chains afterwards, in the latter part of the last century, when George III. was king—to the parson's daughter, who went to read "Pilgrim's Progress" to her, "I have had a message from the Lord." The lady, who was not unaccustomed to hear very old women say strange things, asked innocently, "What was the message?" "Why," answered the nonagenarian, "the butler from the great house was here yesterday, and "told me that the Lord" (meaning the noble owner) "had told him that George, the celebrated jockey, is going to ride the favourite for the Derby, and I do hope he will win." So you see the poor old woman had mixed up her theology with stable talk; and, old as she was, her mind was on the Derby, as well as ours.

The fact was that the occupier of the big house—"the Lord," as the poor people called him—was never known to say or do anything except what was kind and generous to every one about him, especially to the poor, and consequently every one's heart was in the favourite's success, out of regard to the owner; and there is little doubt that, had someone suddenly suggested that prayers should be offered up for the favourite's success, the primitive people would not have seen any profanity in it; and most certainly, had anyone shouted out in the middle of the sermon, "Ten to one against the favourite!" the parson—whom probably I knew better than anyone else in this life, and who never bet in his life before—would have answered, "Done, man! done, in sovereigns!" So great was the feeling in favour of the owner, that a clergyman whom I met at dinner in London the Sunday before the Derby, said to me, "I believe a racecourse to be little better than a pandemonium, and I hate the whole system; but the owner is such a kind-

hearted man, that I would go there myself if it could secure his success."

It was a royal treat to be taken into the stable to see the horse—a treat which no well-bred gentlemen would ever think of asking for, as it is a difficult thing to refuse on the owner's part, and *me judice*, you may as well ask to see a man's banking book.

The favourite was all sixteen hands; a splendid bay, with a beautiful head and a large, full eye, as soft as a gazelle's, and in temper as gentle as a lamb. He received his visitors, especially ladies, on whose shoulders he would lay his head (happy horse!), like a thoroughbred gentleman, and came up—possibly with an eye to a little bit of sugar, or apple, or bread,—and did the honours of his loose box with great effect. Very few strangers ever saw him; and I fancy that I grew six inches, and swelled in proportion, when I received a message one Sunday afternoon from the owner, that he would be happy to show me the stables the next morning, and that, if the weather only held on as bad as it then was—it was blowing a December hurricane from the south-west,—I might see him galloped on Monday at two o'clock in the wind and rain.

The park was a splendid place for training, with three-quarters of a mile finish—very like the Derby course. There were only two paths through the park, and all adits and exits were easily watched; and should a stranger be found out of the lawful beaten track, what was easier than for one of the keepers (who were many in number) to punch that stranger's head? No fear of a magistrate of sound religious principles convicting anyone in that part of the country for thrashing a tout who was after our favourite. He would be much more likely to give a tout three months for running his head against a keeper's stick in the exercise of the keeper's duty.

Barring treachery from within, which was very unlikely, that horse was safe from the touts though once we thought that we were done. It happened thus. The old parson was ill, and the clergy of the neighbouring cathedral town being in "full blast," as the manufacturers say, owing to some grand Church week, a stranger came from London for two or three Sundays. He was a curious kind of man, and not much like a parson in manners or carriage. People were civil to him, of course, and he had the natural curiosity which most of the parish had about our favourite. Coming out of church one Sunday, the wife of the noble owner was talking about some suspicious people having been seen about the woods, and a sudden idea occurred to me which nearly paralyzed her: "Lady ——," I said, "I have it! that new parson is a Newmarket tout as sure as we are born!" The idea was almost too horrible to think of.

A young lady who was staying at the Vicarage, after having been sworn to secrecy by every oath which would be likely to stop a woman's tongue, was allowed to accompany me to see the favourite gallop; and although she was particular, as a rule, about catching cold, and damp fee, she cheerfully walked through the long wet grass to a hill side in the park, in such a storm as I never saw except in the Witches' scene in "Macbeth."

The favourite had his hood on—and he carried, as I thought, but I did not inquire, of course, a much heavier weight than the Derby regulation weight, and was led by a powerful mare ridden by a feather-weight boy who looked like a squirrel on an oak-tree; but despite the weather, which was tremendous, the horse came along with a magnificent stride, at a pace which seemed to me quite equal to Derby speed, and pulled up after his mile and a quarter perfectly fresh.

Everything seemed to prosper: the jockey who was to

ride the horse came down and tried him and was delighted with his going, and when early spring came on and our favourite was removed to his final training quarters on the Sussex Downs, and we missed the people at the big house and our trainer and jockeys, our little parish grew quite dull.

One day at luncheon the Vicar came in, looking as if he had seen the Father of Evil himself.

"What is the matter, Tom?" asked his wife, quite alarmed.

"My dear, dear wife! I have just heard the most dreadful thing in the world," answered the parson.

"What is it, my dear?"

"Why, some villains have put some broken glass in the favourite's gallop, in Sussex. I would have such fellows hanged twice over, ay, and quartered, too." This he said, forgetting that on the previous Sunday he had preached forgiveness down to any extent, and even so far possibly as forgiving a man who ran away with one's mother-in-law.

I wonder how many hundreds of persons on cricket-grounds and elsewhere asked me if I could give them any "information," knowing that my people lived in the parish where the favourite used to be. To one and all I gave the same answer, which was, that if they believed in anything such as honesty on the Turf, they now had the chance of backing a horse whose owner possessed that quality, and if not, they had better leave it alone; and moreover, that if I had any so-called "information," I was not going to betray the confidence of a man who had made me free of his stables on the faith of my being a gentleman and not a tout.

The Derby Day approached, and we had the latest news that the horse was safe in the neighbourhood of Epsom, and that all was well; and that to prevent mistakes some of the

keepers—all North-countrymen, slow to speak and quick to act—had gone down with him to form a body-guard, and prevent the possibility of the horse being got at.

On looking out of my window on the morning of that memorable Derby Day, the only thing visible was one perpetual stream of rain, which looked like endless small bell-ropes which were pouring down from a dark-brown ceiling, which was called by courtesy a sky. Talk about a wet day—this was a concentration of all the cataracts in the world, sent by atmospheric pressure through miles of colossal cullenders. Ladies, as ladies always do, with their usual unselfishness, were deploring the spoiling of a holiday, which a guest of mine—a parson—and myself were going to enjoy at Epsom, and could not understand how I kept up my spirits and whistled with keen delight, as I arrayed myself in an old fishing dress, which consisted of waterproof boots which came up to my knees over my trousers, a tarpaulin coat which reached to my heels, and a very much-worn waterproof wideawake, with sloping sides, like a beefsteak pudding, two sizes too large for my head; the combined dress making me look about as big a blackguard as any who started for the Downs that day.

I was perfectly indifferent to everything during the journey down, utterly unmindful of people who offered me correct cards, or *Punch* or the latest sporting paper, or tracts warning me of certain perdition if I went to the Derby. Weather, and eating and drinking, were things of nought. One thing only was on my mind, which was the sight which I saw in December, of our favourite going like lightning through mud and slush, and against weather as bad as we could have that day, and I made up my mind he would do it again.

Once having gained Barnard's Stand, and having established myself in a good place next to a post, high up,

immediately behind the judge's box, and opposite the winning post, time was no object. I did not miss the Punch-and-Judy men, or stilts, or knockemdowns, or gipsies, all of which unfortunate people never stirred out on that miserable day: it seemed nothing extraordinary that the only things visible were thousands of square yards of umbrellas, and nothing else. Nor was anything else an object. A fight took place close to me, in which I took no interest: I saw one man pick another's pocket, and did not care to interfere; and my feeling was one of gratitude to the hundreds of thousands who had paid our village the compliment to come down in such weather to see our race —for it was *our* Derby and nobody else's. Here were my parson friend and myself, two representatives of our parish, and ready to fight the whole crowd—one down, t'other come on,—who said a word against our horse, or his owner. Father Noah might have come by again in his ark, as of yore—as he might well have done,—and I am quite sure that we two, the parson and myself, would have stopped outside to see race.

I suppose there *was* some racing before the Derby, as I remember bells ringing, crowds clearing, shouting, and numbers going up, and occasionally beds of tulips flying by, which no doubt were really jockeys and horses racing: nothing roused me till I heard the real bell sounding for clearing the course for our Derby. Quite right of the Commissioners of Police to send all those constables to clear the way for our favourite. Ah, I perceive that other jockeys on horses take advantage of the open space, and are galloping too. Well, I have no objection; we are not selfish. At last I saw a crowd coming down near our stand. No, there was no mistake! there was our favourite, with George on his back, and the owner and trainer walking by him, and one or two helpers and some of the keepers, and I see the

jockey lean down for a moment and speak to the owner. George gives him a shake of the rein, no whip or spur, and our favourite passes us towards Tattenham Corner, going possibly a little stiff. There is no mistake about it, the match is our village against the world.

"Call *that* a horse," shouted a man close to me, who was eating some fat greasy meat out of a piece of Daily Telegraph newspaper, with a very doubtful knife, and holding in the palm of his left hand a dirty piece of bread, which he gnawed like a dog, and whose mouth seemed filled with equal proportions of teeth like broken rails (which had never been washed by anything but beer since he was weaned), the Litany utterly perverted, and the lowest taproom slang, *plus* his cold meat and bread; "I call *him* (I omit the adjectives and substantives of the speaker) a cow. I'll lay a level '*quid*' (thieves' Latin for a sovereign) he ain't first, second, or third."

"Done!" I shouted in his ear, with such a roar that the man almost jumped off the stand; and in my excitement I called him by an epithet similar to one which Mr. Chucks the boatswain in "Peter Simple," delighted in, which if true—as no doubt it was—would have qualified him to quarter the "bar sinister" on his escutcheon.

"Halves!" shouted the parson who was with me; so I and the Church were partners in a sovereign bet, which was the only one we had.

Again the favourite passes us on his return gallop to the paddock, with a magnificent stride this time, utterly regardless of mud or weather. I could have shaken hands if I had had time, with every one near me, for I felt sure that our favourite was the favourite of nine out of ten.

A kind of sulky presence of mind came over me again, and I watched with comparative indifference the horses file out through the paddock to the post.

A gentleman behind me, knowing—by instinct I suppose —how utterly absorbed I was in the race, and whom I afterwards found out to be a great West of England horse-breeder, very kindly offered to keep me 'posted up' as to the success of the favourite, as he said, though not a betting man, he knew every horse, and the names and colours of the riders and all about them. At a quarter-past three o'clock the lot were at the post, and after a horse called Sky-blue had bolted three or four times, for one whole hour the last horse in the rank, one called Tambourine, every time a start was attempted, stuck his feet hard against the ground, and stood on his head with his heels in the air and would not move, although friendly hands with stout sticks gave him one or two which would have seriously injured a hippopotamus. All this time my informant, who was an admirable judge, told me that the favourite was as quiet as possible, and not the least flurried, and the false starts were more likely to prejudice the other horses the most. At last the starter left Tambourine at the post, and after thirty-three false starts they were off in a hurricane of wind and rain.

My friend behind me was very hopeful and encouraging. "Now," he said, "he is in a good place by the bushes; they are making for the Corner; now he is well round, well through his horses, a little wide, perhaps, but out of the ruck; now he is shaking them all off. Look at him passing the stand! He must win! He must win. No, by Jove, he's broken down!" (I saw the horse go from under his jockey almost.) "No, he's all right again!" Then, for the first time, I opened my mouth just as the horse was within a hundred yards or so of home, and I know not why, except from utter madness, I kept on shrieking out like a maniac the jockey's name, in a voice which could be heard half-way across the course, and in a moment I saw two horses locked together dash past the judge's chair.

Then came the babel of voices. "Favourite won!" "No Italian!" "No, dead-heat!" The fact was, as I learnt afterwards, that neither jockey knew which horse had won. I waited quietly for the verdict, when—oh! horror—a stoutish elderly man in a red coat (the old clerk of the course), mounted on a very powerful chestnut horse with four white stockings, trotted into the space in front of the rubbing-house, and led out Italian first, followed by our favourite, who was beaten on the post by a very short half head. And then—I am not the least ashamed to say so—I sat down and cried like a child.

The judge, of course, incurred much odium, because he made a mistake about the number of the third horse, which had afterwards to be reversed, but I have no doubt that he was right, as Mr. F. Verrall, whose obituary was published a short time since, and whom I knew very well, and who backed the favourite, was standing outside the judge's box and could see the race as well as the judge; and he told me that he fancied that the favourite's shoulder and the jockey were first, but the favourite's head was down, and Italian threw up his head in his last stride, and Mr. Verrall agreed with the judge about the half head, and said that had he been judge he would have given the same decision.

As to what followed after, is it not written in the annals of racing how our favourite was nearly beaten by a second-rate French horse on the Friday following the Derby, and got into bad odour, and was peppered tremendously by the Ring for months? How the greatest bookmaker laid £11,000 to £1,000 against him in one bet with the owner, and paid the bet the night of the Leger? How the horse went to Doncaster, and with a start of a hundred yards behind the other horses at the post he won the Leger easily? How our villagers and those of the neighbouring

villages waited from two o'clock in the afternoon till ten o'clock at night at the railway station, near the big house for the owner's return, a few days after the Leger? How they took the horses out of the owner's carriage and dragged him home, and illuminated the park, and burnt tar-barrels? And this was all done by those who probably amongst them all had not five pounds on the race, or any other race in the world, and it was done simply because the owner was a kind neighbour and honest sportsman.

I do not believe there is any better evidence of a "*mens sana in corpore sano*" than for people to take an almost mad interest in any honest sport or amusement. If one only compares those who do so with the Mawworms who are always holding meetings about their neighbours' doings, he will see which are of the happiest frame of mind. No doubt many of them are honest, but I have no doubt also that to many of those who attend the Exeter Hall meetings, and Moody and Sankey meetings, and the like, the excitement is the real object, *bar one*—as their wickeder (?) brethren would say,—and that *bar one* is love of vulgar notoriety and self-glory, and seeing their names in the so-called religious papers. I suppose the fact is that I hate your amateur religionist who whistles through his nose like a sandpiper, and bothers me about his ideas of my state of mind, and foretells my perdition because I like to see two noble animals have a fair struggle for victory for the struggler's sake, as much as I hate the man who would be utterly indifferent whether the competitors are horses, dogs, pigs, cows, or two drops of rain running down a glass, so long as he can rob someone. The Mawworms are like the Puritans of old, who, according to Lord Macaulay, went regularly wild about bear-baiting, not because it hurt the bear, but because it pleased the people.

There is an anecdote about our favourite which I know

to be true, for I had it from the noble owner. At Doncaster he was restless and off his feed, and great fears were entertained that he had been got at, when one of the stable-boys said to the trainer, "He's a-looking for his kitten."

On the chance, a telegram was sent to the training stables, two hundred and fifty miles off, for someone to come at once by first express train with the kitten: and the boy turned out to be right. Directly the kitten was out of his basket and saw the horse, he jumped on his back, ran over his head, and was on the manger in a moment, and began patting his nose, and the horse was quiet at once, and fed as well as ever.

Of course every real racing man will see that this sketch —which is true in every detail—is so ear-marked that there can be no doubt as to the name of the owner and of the favourite; but I purposely have not put the real names, because, first, I never put people's names (except on public matters) in print without their leave; and, secondly, because I want to baulk our friend the sporting (?) penny-a-liner, who would talk about "that prince of sportsmen and good fellow Lord Blank:" just as he *will*, in some hunting account of some run which he describes from the hearsay evidence of some "beery" underwhip—having himself probably seen nothing more of hounds and huntsmen than a glimpse of them passing a tap-room window at which he and the pot-boy were sitting—take in vain the names of numbers of gentlemen to whom he never spoke in his life. But there is a moral to this. See how happily the world goes when the parson and squire pull together, and when, as in this case, the owner of the favourite went out of his way almost to avoid offending the honest prejudices of the parson.

NOTE.—There is a pleasant reminiscence about this article. Lord St. Vincent, one of the kindest men who ever lived, was owner of

Lord Clifden, which was the Derby favourite, and was trained for the Derby, first at Godmersham, in Kent, of which parish my late father was vicar. Some twelve or fifteen years after my father's death, and long after Lord St. Vincent had left Godmersham, I received a letter from him, asking me to come and bring one of my daughters to his youngest daughter's wedding, in London, as he wished to have a reminiscence of "dear old Godmersham," as he called it. We had lost sight of one another for years, and I "countered" him by writing a sketch of his former home, and of his favourite race-horse, and got the printers of Baily to get me an advance copy a day or two before publication, and sent it to him as a wedding present. He told me that the story of the kitten was perfectly accurate, and the moral of the story about squire and parson at the end was quite true. The late George Fordham rode Lord Clifden, which was beaten by Macaroni by a short half-head. Tambour Major made thirty-three (!) false starts. The judge put up the number of the third horse wrong, and had to alter it.

IN A RACING STABLE.

THE worst use you can put a man to, say the anti-capital punishment party, is to hang him. The worst use you can put a magnificent horse to, say I, is to make him a mere vehicle for gambling, and to cause him to be so handled in the stable or on the race-course that his whole strength and energy are intentionally cramped for the purposes of the betting-ring or possibly of his owner.

The late Lord Derby was very strong on the question of the abuse of horse-racing, and stated in print—I think in the *Times*—that expressions such as "it is not his journey," "he was never meant," &c., &c., are direct proofs that as regards the class called "the sporting world," as contra-distinguished from the real British sportsman, the horse is an animal about which they care nothing, except as a means of gambling.

In the present autumn I had a private introduction to a well-known and much respected trainer and owner of race-horses, who had gone through the whole career of racing from boyhood, from the lowest rung of the ladder, and who, owing to his own industry and integrity, lives in a comfortable house surrounded by a small home farm of his own, all freehold, and all bought and paid for by his own industry.

We are now looking out of the trainer's drawing-room window on to a magnificent sweep of down country, which commands a grand view of over more than one county. The hour is eleven, and it is Sunday morning.

A long string of horses in single file are coming back to the stables, past the drawing-room window, each horse ridden by the boy who attends to him except two, on one of which sits the trainer and on another his father, who has gone beyond the Psalmist's allowance of life by some years, but who—like the retired tallow-chandler who bargained to attend the place of business "on dipping days"—always rides a horse at exercise every morning.

Old fogies who read the Orlando and Running Rein trial, over thirty years ago, will remember that much laughter was caused by a witness explaining to the judge that they never "sweated horses" on a Sunday, but only walked them. I went on Sunday morning because the horses are all walked early, and come in at eleven, and the stables shut at noon or soon after, so that I could see them all being cleaned.

Whether there were fifty or seventy horses or more I could not tell, as I walked from stable to stable, each of which was so much like the other that there was no means of counting the number; and, moreover, I did *not* wish to count, reasoning that when a man invites one behind the scenes to see that which is not shown to the general public, the golden rule is, "Ask no questions."

My friend very kindly showed me everything which would interest a novice, and gave me the names of many horses, with an account of their performances and engagements, and when he did *not* give me the names I never asked him.

The most striking feature about a racing stable to my mind is the discipline and order. There was a place for everything, and everything was expected to be in its place.

We went into one loose-box after another, most of which formed a separate stable, consisting of a square room, with small sky-lights in the roof, a ventilator, but no side windows. And the same sight met the eye in each of one boy and a horse in solitary confinement *pro tem.*, the boy cleaning his horse after exercise. Every horse seemed to know the trainer directly he spoke, and many of them put their heads on his shoulder and fondled him, though a few of the "softer sex" welcomed him by putting back their ears and pretending to lash out with their hind feet. This was only ladies' chaff. I could quite understand the secret of success which my guide imparted to me, which is excessive gentleness and kindness from the time a colt is first taken up for breaking; and he told me that if a horse is ever bad-tempered or vicious, it is, as a rule, the fault of the boy.

Reverting to the question of order. Everything is done under the master's eye, and if a headstall is on the wrong nail, or a comb out of place, it is sure to be observed in a moment, and the boy using it will be reminded—if an old offender with a sharp reproof. But one of the most striking features in training is the wonderful memory which the manager must have. It is clear that he has the whole of the stable on his mind, and remembers every ailment, or threatened ailment, of every horse, and remembers also the treatment which he ordered the day before, and, without written notes or memoranda, inquires the result of yesterday's treatment, and gives new directions.

No wonder that training is anxious work, as at any moment a horse may tread on some rough substance, no matter how carefully the course is kept, or put his feet in a hole, or suddenly sprain himself, and the success of months of training may be jeopardised by an accident, the result of which cannot be known for a day or two perhaps.

It may be a slight injury reducible by hot water and bandages in four-and-twenty hours; it may turn out in eight-and-forty hours to be fatal to the fulfilment of a horse's engagements for the rest of the season. What is a trainer to do? If the owner is an excitable man a false alarm may drive him half crazy; if he is an unreasonable man he will never forgive his trainer—should the accident prove bad—for not telegraphing to him on the first suspicion of mischief. Added to these troubles is the danger of mischief from without. There must be black sheep in this world, as any Head Master in England will tell you there are in all ranks of life—and in spite of the eyes of Argus the temptations offered by the scum of the earth outside the stables must often break a trainer's rest. A globule, the size of a homœopathic dose, may contain enough mischief to stop a horse temporarily, without permanent injury, and without fear of detection. Given a weak-minded or wicked boy, a villain with the medical appliances, and ten golden sovereigns, and where is the trainer's labour?

People little think when the horse, the engagements of which may be worth many thousands of pounds, is stripped for their admiration, how black care has sat behind the trainer for weeks and weeks past as well as behind the horseman.

Turning into the home farm and the paddocks, where brood mares of the first pedigree are walking about heavy in foal, it was pleasing to see how many of the mares "sought the master's hand," and to witness how they came up to him as if they were ladies seeing a visitor; and a young colt, of six months old, of very good pedigree, who had his first headstall, did the honours of his paddock, quite like a gentleman; but on the first crack of the whip like the celebrated—

"Liber et exultans latis equus ardet in agris."

the baby racer threw up his heels, and of his own accord ran an imaginary Derby round his paddock for ten minutes at least, leaping over small furze or bramble fences at intervals.

That home farm must be a good thing for a trainer who has a large establishment to keep up of his own household and his stable-boys and servants. And so it struck me that to be a successful trainer the following qualities are necessary :—

1. Honesty, industry, and great physical endurance from boyhood.

2. A knowledge of men and horses, and jockey-boys, household management, economy, as well as management of corn and farm produce, and pigs.

3. A genial and hospitable manner, tempered with a maximum of caution as regards forming off-hand acquaintanceships.

4. A good education, with facility at accounts and correspondence.

5. Health and prosperity, and a good helpmate *above all.*

Moral.—In my visit to the racing establishment I did not hear a single rough word, and I did not see a single thing done which did not say "industry, and diligence, and care." When those qualities have been exercised on the noblest of God's brute creatures, anyone who directly or indirectly does anything to rob a horse of his health, or prevent his developing to the fullest the wonderful powers of endurance and speed with which Nature has invested him, is, to my mind, one of the lowest of God's creatures in human form.

Note.—When you have seen a racing stable don't say "No" when the trainer takes you home and introduces you to his family, and puts before you some silvery cold

boiled beef, pickles, home-made butter, and home-made bread, flanked by some very fine bitter beer. Then is the time to eat, drink, and be merry; and those viands (for I count the beer as a viand), after a turn on the downs with an agreeable and intelligent expert in racing, are worth a king's ransom.

NEWMARKET.

BY A NON-RACING MUFF WHO KNOWS NOTHING ABOUT IT.

I SUPPOSE that I am within the mark if I say that ninety per cent. of my every-day acquaintance have been to Epsom, and that not five per cent. of them have ever been to Newmarket. All the world has an idea that a Newmarket meeting is sheer business, and they are not far wrong. The cause of it is simple enough, and it is because the Heath is the private property of the Jockey Club, and is under the supervision and management of the first racing men in the world, who are the law-makers of one of the most popular of English sports, and the strictest order and regularity are maintained. Just the same as at Lord's, the committee are the authority to the whole world in cricket, and the sport is conducted by those who have been bred and brought up in the game, and who know the value of order and good management. I was to have gone down with the editor of a sporting paper to see the Middle Park Plate run for; but I missed my train all "along of" the Church Congress. The fact was that a dear old country parson was staying with

me, who never came home from the Croydon Congress till after eleven o'clock at night; and having the appetite of a good honest man with an easy conscience, he wanted his supper, and after his supper he liked a long churchwarden by the kitchen fire before going to bed. Could I say "no" to a worthy Churchman who wanted his pipe after a long day's work? The result was that when my hot water was brought at seven o'clock on the "Middle Park" day, I told the water-carrier to carry the water to a place where it could have been kept hot, and said, "Bother Newmarket," and turned me round for just five minutes more, and you know what that means.

Consequently I went to Newmarket alone the next day, by 9.30 special, with about twenty passengers, all told; and I was alone for the first half of the racing, until I tumbled across an old Sussex professional cricketer—with whom I have played many and many a match at Eastbourne—who makes a book, and under his auspices I saw all the celebrities of the turf who were present.

It is a good thing to see a new place alone, as you see everything for yourself.

On getting out at the station I jumped into a trap, and made the fifth passenger, and completed the number, my four companions being "outside" bookmakers, and the trap being the most rickety, and the horse the longest, boniest, and most bow-backed quadruped, up-hill, I ever saw. The remarks of my companions on the breed and performances of the noble animal which was drawing us were more humorous than polite. I don't believe that there was a portion of his body which is known to anatomical science which was not discussed and spoken of disparagingly.

The first mouthful of air on the Heath was worth going all the way to inhale, for the day was autumnal and bracing, and within half an hour I had what I have not had

for a long time, and that was a raging appetite. More power to the elbow of the people who cut sandwiches at Jarvis's booth; they are real bread and good meat, none of the crummy abomination, smeared with bad butter and lined with tough ham, which one too often gets at a railway station, but the sandwiches were a fair "fist-full of good victuals," and the beer was good too.

I am very fond of a grand sweep of country, with God's pure air blowing across it. Possibly I appreciate it the more through having been born and having lived on the Wiltshire Downs during my childhood, and my lungs are made for it. Though living now within eight or nine miles of the Grand Stand on Epsom Downs, I have only been to the races four times in thirteen years, and then I have made my pilgrimage for the benefit of some country cousins. But many times in the year, when seedy, I walk up to Epsom Downs and back for the sake of the magnificent pure air, and walk the Derby course whilst they are getting me something to eat at the Rubbing House, and when I come back don't I fall on to the grub? Many a time in the winter, as far as I could see, I was the only person on the Downs. Ay! and don't I bring back many ghosts of the past, in the days of the old gambling-booths and the immortal Jerry, the king of the beggars, and of Lord Chesterfield, Prince Louis Napoleon, afterwards Emperor, Count D'Orsay, Crockford, Gully, and hundreds of others who were pointed out to me when I saw Atilla win the first Derby I ever saw, in 1842.

But I must cut Epsom and get back to Newmarket, as I am going to jot down a few notes for the benefit of those who have never been, and with a view to induce them to enjoy as much pleasure as I did. To show how unnecessary it is to have a thorough knowledge of racing to appreciate Newmarket, I may remark at this minute that I can call to

mind the names of only four horses in England, viz., Silvio, Lady Golightly, Hampton, and Shillelagh, and if you were to give me a ten-pound note, I couldn't remember another for the life of me.

I think there is something contagious in the precision of racing men. Order and neatness are of course the keystone to success in a racing stable, and I often observe in travelling up and down the Epsom line how neat the trainers and jockeys are in their appointments; and so it is at Newmarket. I thought I never saw a cleaner town than Newmarket, except Epsom, which is one of the neatest places in Surrey, and when no racing is going on, one of the very quietest; and such, I presume is the case at Newmarket.

Going back to the air of the Heath, and the charm of the scenery and quiet. There are no niggers, no three-card men, no Whitechapel gipsies, no throwing at the sticks, no parade of the scum of St. John's Wood and Pimlico, painted and noisy and drunk; no witty (?) London cads squirting some filth out of a leaden squirt, or pea-shooting, or making ribald and senseless remarks; no sporting cads in tandem carts with a horn; but order and quiet prevail, the only noise heard being the roar of the betting ring.

And now I want to ask one question, and it is this: Why should the outside bookmakers (some few of whom I recognized as the worst offenders at London suburban meetings) refrain from their blackguard and filthy language at Newmarket? and why should they poison the air with their horrible oaths in the neighbourhood of London, and allow themselves to be surrounded by ticket-stealers, whom some of the bookmakers (if they don't encourage them) see stealing tickets with impunity? The reason is simple enough. It is because they would be put off the course at once by the authorities whose property the Heath is, and it would

be very good policy for owners of private suburban race-courses to keep as good order as is kept at Newmarket. Mind I don't say that many of the outside bookmakers are not honest men, as I know to the contrary. I have one in my mind's eye now, who supports a very aged mother in comfort, and who is as civil as a man can be, and as honest as the day, and is trusted by his neighbours with many and many a sovereign to do his best with in backing something at the post. Moreover, some of them are not only remarkably well-behaved, but very witty and amusing to boot.

Now about this Newmarket Heath. I am talking to those who have never been there. In imagination, take a very large tea-tray, and bend the top a good way diagonally upwards, so as to make a hill with a sky-line as viewed from the centre. The sky-line is a great feature in the prospect, as from a distance horsemen and carriages look like moving toys against the sky. Looking from the bottom of the tray towards the sky-line, put down a Noah's ark in the upper left-hand quarter, and dot about the course here and there smaller Noah's arks as fixed stands for certain points of finishing. Put the bowl of a tobacco-pipe here and there about the tray to represent judges' chairs, and stick up some pieces of tobacco-pipe near the bowls, here and there, for posts, and then imagine the bottom of the tray to be an immense sweep of beautifully-kept smooth grass, divested of stones, broken bottles, or rubbish of any kind, and imagine that you have a grand view of the fen country, with the circular horizon just as you have at sea—in fact, the fen land which you see in the horizon was sea once,—throw in a fine autumn day, and there is Newmarket Heath.

And how many incongruous memories Newmarket brings back. The Rye House Plot, and Charles II., James II.,

and William III.,* and George IV and his racing scrapes, with the Jockey Club and the Chiffneys; and Osbaldeston's great two hundred miles match, accomplished in something more than eight hours and a half—the wager being that with the pick of fifty horses he did not ride two hundred miles in ten hours; and Admiral Rous, the prince of fair play; and old ring scenes connected with Six Mile Bottom and Milden Hall, and prize-fighters training on the heath. Why, a man who trained on that heath ought to be able to fight a threshing machine and lick it. Hundreds of men and things of the past are seen through the curtain of time.

Oh, the joy of the elbow-room—which enables one to walk about and look at everybody and everything—not forgetting the trainers' wives and daughters in their broughams and family phaetons, and ladies on splendid horses, who ride about without fear of having their ears shocked by oaths

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* [A.D. 1698.] "The ambassador [Tallard, the French ambassador] was graciously received at Kensington, and was invited to accompany William to Newmarket, where the largest and most splendid spring meeting ever known was about to assemble. The attraction must be supposed to have been great, for the risks of the journey were not trifling. The peace had, all over Europe, and nowhere more than in England, turned many old soldiers into marauders.

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Nowhere does the peril seem to have been so great as on the Newmarket Road. There indeed robbery was organised on a scale unparalleled since the days of Robin Hood and Little John. A fraternity of plunderers, thirty in number, squatted near Waltham Cross, under the shades of Epping Forest, and built themselves huts, from which they sallied forth with sword and pistol to bid passengers stand. The King and Tallard were doubtless too well attended to be in jeopardy. But soon after they passed the dangerous spot there was a fight on the highway attended with loss of life."—LORD MACAULAY'S HISTORY.

and blasphemy and blackguardism. Then, too, there are the little stable-boys on the yearlings, at exercise, looking like children on mad spiders. It was a treat to hear them talk to their horses when restive, and to see the horses turn round and laugh at them. I suppose it must have been a "horse laugh." I have heard it hundreds of times stated as a fact that the hardest thing in the world is to square the little stable-boy who lives with his horse. An occasional rascally trainer or jockey may be "got at," as Turf history proves, but the horse and the boy are inseparable friends, and I believe the story that the horse is the last friend in the world whom the boy would sell.

Their little fresh-coloured faces looked just like cherubims' heads on a cathedral stall, though I fancy if they were to sing with the seraphims the latter would be a little astonished at some of their expressions, which, parrot-like, they pick up in the stables. One young gentleman, who might have weighed three stone or so, and who was about forty-eight inches high, related to his companions an anecdote about what he called the "off hind leg of a tough goose" which they had on Michaelmas Day, and his remarks on the deceased bird were more eccentric than complimentary. If I was Fielding, and we were in the days of George II., instead of Queen Victoria, I would relate the story, but am afraid I must not put it in print. But upon the whole they seemed a happy lot of little fellows, who had the appearance of being kindly treated and well looked after. They are doubtless as good as any other lot of English boys, and their ringing laughter made very pretty music in the clear autumn air. There was one grand old gentleman on horseback who wore one of the old-fashioned long coats, which was neither a great-coat nor a *surtout*, but like a huntsman's coat of the last century, and mahogany tops and a loose white neckcloth, who was accom-

panied by a little curly-haired boy of about nine years old on a priceless little horse of about thirteen to fourteen hands high. The little fellow's breeches were about the size of a pair of wicket-keeping gloves, and his leggings no bigger than a lady's six-button gauntlet. He was sitting carelessly on his horse, with his reins and small hunting-whip in his right hand, and leaning on the pummel with his left hand, and remarking to his delighted grandfather, "But, Grandpapa, Uncle George said at breakfast the Monarch could give Sailor Boy (to coin two names) seven pounds and a beating any day." Verily, verily, these boys are born and bred in racing.

Don't let anyone listen to the nonsense which people say, that it is useless going to Newmarket unless you are mounted. Trainers, and racing men who bet heavily, and who wish to attend the ring and see all the race, must of course be mounted, but those who are content to see the finish, or see the race some way from the post, have no difficulty whatever. Half the fun is watching the troops of horsemen, and the trainers' ponies, some of them wonderful specimens, savouring strongly of Welsh ponies, New Foresters, and Exmoors. There was one rough iron-grey, wall-eyed, little dray-horse of a pony, apparently able to carry a billiard table on his back, whose legs were almost as thick as mine, who was so intelligent that I am sure he had a soul, and possibly a heavy book with some other pony on the race. Talk about excitement dying out with advanced middle age—why I saw a well-known trainer, who must be *very.* long in the tooth, galloping on one of these ponies, and shrieking at the top of his voice, "A hundred pounds the young 'un wins." He was as mad as a Harrow or an Eton boy at Lord's, pending a crisis in the match. Even one of the mounted police was on an old racer thirteen years old, who, according to the rider's account, had run third or

fourth in the Derby one year. Why, every horse one met seemed to know all about it. If you are a stranger, any gentleman will tell one where to go for each race, and half the pleasure is walking about on the beautiful turf on a fine day. Oh, but what a terrible place it must be in rain or snow! Barring two or three scrubby bushes, there is not shelter for your corns even in the open.

Shouldn't I like to enclose a circle of 450 yards in diameter with a 10-feet bank, well turfed round, with a terrace on the top for spectators, and lay out a cricket ground on that heath, and not let a living soul be on the ground except the eleven, the two batsmen, and the umpires, as is the case at the dripping-pan at Lewes. What a splendid ground it would make.

I have a nasty knack of talking to myself when alone, and sometimes of quarrelling with myself out loud; so, after two hours of my own company, I was not sorry to meet my Sussex cricketer, who knew everything and everybody. I may allude to an admirable arrangement, which is having the birdcage, which answers to the paddock at Epsom, adjoining the Grand Stand, and open to the public as regards seeing everything, as it was a great pleasure to see the horses saddled and walked about, and the owners, jockeys, and trainers, and to see the people in the Jockey Club, and all the real English sportsmen. Let me not omit also to draw attention to another admirable arrangement, which is, having a clock-tower on the Stand, which is a great convenience. I do delight to see a sport carried out by noblemen and gentlemen who really understand it, although I may know little of it myself, as much as I hate shams of all kinds; and although I was at Newmarket on a quiet day, I never was more pleased in my life. The enthusiasm of the female equestrians, some of whom wore Napoleon boots, and knickerbockers, I *suppose*—we cannot suppose that they

wear the unwhisperables—but it would be impertinent to inquire,—and short habits (perfectly neat and lady-like), rode splendidly, and were as excited as I sometimes am at a cricket match, when I have a colt in a county eleven, and I fancy it is the same with them about horses. No doubt they know several of the horses from the time they were foals, and have seen them galloped many and many a time, and look on them as almost members of their own family. I was reading in some book—"Post and Paddock," I think—how the landlady of an inn, who was aroused in the middle of the night by the news that some celebrated mare had foaled, jumped out of bed and ran across the stable-yard with nothing on but her night-shift, to see the new arrival. Ay, and I can imagine how racing becomes a passion, like anything else; and how the better half of creation take an immense interest in a noble horse for the horse's sake.

How the gentlemen of the press manage to report as accurately and well as they do is a wonder to me. Their only chance is being driven from one course to another and writing in a brougham. It is hard work enough for them to sit in a room on a cricket ground, and to note every over and hit, and to furnish the admirable reports which they publish each day in the summer, and which reports are the next best thing to seeing the matches; but rushing about from the betting ring to the post and back again all over the course, and writing their report in a carriage, must be very hard and exhausting work. These are the men who are the *bona fide* sporting press.

There now, I have jotted down my ideas of a most enjoyable place and a most enjoyable scene, for the benefit of those who have never been, and I can promise them that, if they don't want to go into the Stand, and are content with an occasional good sandwich when hungry, and some good

beer, *not* forgetting the home-brewed, which can be got in the town in many places, they can go first-class by special expresss to Newmarket and back, and have their eating and drinking, for about five-and-twenty or thirty shillings, all told, and get health and enjoyment, and be in rare good company for little money.

ABOUT BETTING AND GAMBLING.

PERHAPS there is no finer amusement on a dull, wet day than a little quiet betting or gambling occasionally, provided always that the stakes are such as cannot injure any person, and that it is an off-hand pastime begun, continued, and ended on the spur of the moment. Unfortunately, at this present time betting and gambling are the greatest national curses we have, as they have become the business of life to people who can't afford it, and they simply produce an unwholesome greed for getting money—not always honestly—about sports of which they know nothing and never see. In the old days of racing, when the gambling booths were allowed on the Tattenham Corner side of the course, a large number of people who were out for a holiday bought a little experience at rouge et noir, roulette, or the homely teetotum games of goose, anchor, club, spade, diamond, and heart, and also put into a lottery or two ; in fact, they went out with two or three sovereigns to play with, and whether they won or lost did not much matter. It was really only once in a way, as racecourses were not inundated by cheap excursionists as now. Even schoolboys had a shilling Derby lottery in my days.

When I was a boy, card-playing in private houses was very common, and regular card-parties were common also, especially in Cathedral towns—I know not why,—and the seniors played whist, and the general company betook themselves to a round game; "Commerce," which Queen Charlotte played every evening in the days of our great grandmothers, was very fashionable, and Pope Joan, rather a complicated game, which required a board with eight divisions in it. The game is mentioned in "Pickwick," in the Dingley Dell scene. "Vingt-et-un," or "Van Jon," as it was commonly called, came in rather as an innovation some half-century back, and there was a steady family game called "Casino" much played, for love, in parsons' families. In fact, in the Vicarage there was generally Backgammon, and a game of cards for children every winter evening, but all for love. At Christmas, sometimes, a sixpence or two would be put in the pool, but it did more harm than good, as I have seen little men and women with their eyes half out of their heads with excitement as they got near to winning a pool, and go away crying to bed. Card-parties were a custom, and round games were in fashion, and at round games in which ladies took part, the heaviest winners or losers could count their gains or loses at a sovereign or so; but still money passed, and tempers were lost, and if the truth was told, all did not play *quite* fair. There were always one or two—even of the gentle sex—who were suspected of having roving eyes over the hands of those who did not hold their cards up. This card era was not a good musical era. Songs were mild, and pianos milder. "I'd be a Butterfly" was a twittering sentiment at best, and an invitation of "Will you come to the bower?" was not attractive, and not much enthusiasm could be got out of "Off, said the stranger; off, off, and away—and away flew the light bar-r-r-ark o'er the silvery spray." The fact

is, the world was not educated, and little societies were isolated, and people were old-fashioned, and there was a good deal of boarding-school Miss-ism amongst young ladies, and cards were requisite to prevent people sitting round the room and staring at each other, with little or nothing to say. All this state of things died out with railways and travelling; and music has made rapid strides, not only with ladies, but men have now the sense to find out that playing the piano is no longer considered effeminate, and there are few country houses now where you do not find young men who accompany themselves or others well on the piano, and who can sing part-music at sight, or even a buffo or patter song very fairly, after the model of Corney Grain or the late Charles Matthews. Lawn tennis out of doors—a charming pastime when that terrible bore, a *soi disant* champion player, is conspicious by his absence,—dancing, and music have banished cards from ordinary society; and in what would be called unfashionable life, young clerks and shopmen and *id genus omne* most sensibly and creditably have gone in for volunteering, cricket, rowing, bicycling, football, and all other pastimes on their Saturday half-holidays, and have places of meeting in the winter where music, dramatic recitals, reading—all taken "with tobacco" in these smoking days,—and the general tone of educated people has been much improved. The broad-brimmed hat and "covert coat" schools, who represent the "gent" of Albert Smith's days, who frequent restaurant bars and music-halls and low billiard rooms, and have no two decent ideas, may be dismissed as useless and mischievous excrescences of a city which contains four millions of people; but there is a class of "weak-kneed" brothers of all ranks who are going to ruin through betting and gambling under our very noses every hour. I say again that betting and gambling are the curse of the day. It

is not the occasional turn at roulette or rouge et noir which one saw once a year, perhaps, but it is the daily, nay hourly, betting and gambling. I ask the whole of your readers whether I am saying the truth or not, when I state that you cannot get into a railway carriage among a lot of young fellows without the conversation running on the odds about this or about that, and more than often "nap" is going on. Why do railway directors *not* put a notice on season tickets that they are issued on condition that the holder does not play at cards or any other game for money on the journey? What more demoralising sight is there than seeing young fellows, who are coming some twenty miles or so to London, playing cards at nine o'clock in the morning? It is becoming a public scandal. I knew one card-playing gang by sight on a railway over which I often travelled—about two of them went together in the same carriage; they all had known homes and employments, and possibly "quasi" respectability; *but* I *don't* think they lost *much* money, and I don't think the amount of their salaries would have justified them travelling first class, and I fancy they paid their railway fare, and a good bit more, before the year was out. The first time I travelled by that railway I got in at the last moment and found myself the *non*-playing member in a carriageful; and they *kindly* asked me to join. The proposer of my joining, who took the pack out of what, I believe, is now known as a "card side pocket," was very civil, and so was I, and I made a little joke, the point of which *none* of them saw. "No, thank you," I said—"by the bye, do you remember *Punch's* joke about sudden acquaintances over games: 'Beware of the man who carries a bit of chalk in his pocket and calls the marker Jack?'"—and these fellows never thought it funny. I took stock of them directly I saw there were two card-players and three pigeons.

Horse-racing has no more to do with the betting mania than the man in the moon, *per se;* it is the free press which has done it, and the telegraphs. Every penny, and every halfpenny paper now has the latest odds in respect of all horses, and even foreign racing—in fact, a paper which did not publish the betting lists would have no sale,—and the lists are read by a lot of boobies who don't know a racehorse from a cow, which boobies think it *the* thing to bet; and the aggregate sum subscribed by boobies who bet, and who "put the pot on," is sometimes so considerable as to be worth more than the stakes themselves, and so Mr. Mephistopheles, the owner or the man who "manages the stable," goes to some public place of resort and puts the pot on himself in one big sensation bet, which is taken by a confederate, who is laying on the quiet every shilling he can get against the horse. Nothing is easier than to get up a rumour that the horse pulled up lame, or some story of that kind, and when Mr. Mephistopheles runs his pen through the horse's name, all the knowing ones (?) declare they must have won if the horse had run. And they go on again and again, till the venerable grey-headed butler cannot make out the plate list correctly; and some wretched young clerk—"respectably connected and gentlemanly-looking young man," as the police reports say—has put five or six hundred pounds on the wrong side of the ledger; or young de Plunger has left the cavalry and joined an infantry regiment in India, and so on, and so on, *ad infinitum.*

The real connection with horse-racing and betting proper is this: Betting is a chance for an owner who has a good horse to recoup himself for very heavy expenses. He buys a yearling or two, perhaps, or breeds colts; in fact, he goes in for racing as a business. He enters his horses for various races, and if he has any sense he keeps his thoughts to

himself, and when he is pretty sure that he has a promising two-year-old, he determines to try him in some small race, and if he answers his expectations, he will feel his way towards backing him for the Derby (if he is entered for it), in the following year, at very long odds, and if he gets what he wants, he knows exactly where he stands, and he has simply put so much more capital into his racing expenses. And then, should his horse turn out a real good one, and prominent amongst the leading favourites, and comes to short odds, he is perfectly justified in betting by commission against his own horse enough to cover him, provided he runs his horse fair to win. Or, again, a man of large fortune likes to own and run race horses, and he likes to back his own horses for a win or a place. Why should he not do it just the same as commercial men are buying or selling for rise or fall of markets every day?

As to the bookmakers, the solvent and respectable men are nothing more or less than bankers to the sporting world. They are very clever men and good calculators; and by judiciously laying against everything they make a certain book, as only one horse can win. It is the work of a lifetime, and very harassing work, too; and one thing is always against them, which is that a bookmaker *must* pay although some of his creditors do *not* come to time. His good name is the foundation of his undertaking, and the word of a large proportion of them is as good as Rothschild's in Lombard-street. I have often travelled with and knew many of them, but I never had dealings with them, as betting is not my "vanity," though more than once they have good-naturedly given me a good tip about backing some dark horse for a place, which I have passed on to friends who bet, and they have found it useful.

Again, I have known many men who have studied the history of racing as I have done the history of cricket,

and who know the stud book by heart and pedigrees of horses. They talk, and talk well and authoritatively, too, about the Sweetmeat and Whalebone and Stockwell strain (I think that is the word), and know all the handicaps and weights. Now these men go occasionally to a race and see the horses gallop, and like to take their fancy and back a horse for five, or ten, or twenty, or even fifty or a hundred pounds, according to their means. They have the keenest enjoyment in the sport itself, because they know it and understand it, and see the horse stripped and saddled and galloped; and if they win great is their joy, and if they lose they have had a run for their money anyhow, and no harm is done. The saints and parliament have nothing to do with men of this kind. The "saints" play a game of speculation for livings, and deaneries, and place; and the lover of racing plays a game of speculation for honest amusement, and wins one day and loses another with even temper. The betting lists have demoralised England, and army, navy, bar, trades and professions, and all their adherents and hangers-on must bet about horses of which they know positively nothing. It is a greed for making money without working for it, and ignoring the good old principle of earning one's bread by the sweat of brow or brain. What on earth has the working man—that grumbling, querulous humbug—to do with betting on horse racing? But he does bet no end very often, whilst we pay for his children's education, and he is crying out for want of work. Horse-racing in its purity is one of the noblest sports in the world. Although I know nothing about the arcana of the science, I can read "Post and Paddock," and "Scott and Sebright," and Nimrod's "Turf, Chase, and Road" again and again. They are so fresh and pleasant, and written by men who loved sport for sport's sake. Racing is so fascinating, and the real followers of it are often so

credulous and inexperienced that rogues and scoundrels have grown up round it for a century past, though, thank Heaven, there are plenty of honest owners, and trainers, and jockeys left still. It is seventy years since Dawson was hung at Cambridge for poisoning racers, and the careful reader of "Doctor Syntax" will remember Rowlandson's picture of the Doctor's horror at seeing the favourite, which he backed, "roped" at York races. The scratching of the horse has become so common that nothing is thought of it now; it is sometimes, doubtless, an open swindle, but it cannot be proved or punished.

And now, my dear youngsters, to whom life is somewhat easy, let me say a word to you who have good expectations and a liberal allowance, and who, according to conventional expression, were born to life and a curricle. Let me take one of you, and imagine that you are the last joined officer, looking out of the mess-room window of the cavalry barracks. You have left school only a year, and here you are "with your red scarlet coat, as proud as a goat with your feathers so fine" (though, by-the-bye, the chances are the coat would be blue), as Mickey Free sung. You are in rather a fast regiment with an allowance of five hundred a year and heir to a good property (if the people's William does not abolish the possibility of such a glorious inheritance); your uniform, board, horses, regimental expenses, and other claims, will pull hard against that five hundred and your pay. With plenty of leisure and a love of sport you will probably get a little hunting, shooting, fishing, and of course some garrison racing, and any amount of good society, and your daily life and surroundings as regards comfort do not cost you a third of what people pay at a club. Do rest and be thankful, and turn your back on *real* gambling and betting, and, above all, avoid a book on the Derby. What on earth can you know about it, except

what you read in the papers? Read "Digby Grand," that splendid life-picture of Whyte-Melville's, and inwardly digest it; it is as true as Gospel. Be content to put your sovereign into the lottery on the race-course or back your favourite for a sovereign in the Garrison Steeplechase.

If you bet and gamble you become the property of scoundrels. I know garrison towns pretty well, and there are always a certain class who have decent houses and keep up outward respectability somewhat, and pass for gentlemen, which they almost are. You never meet these men in society in the county, but they are always hand-in-glove with the officers, and they are always ready for loo, lasquinet, poker, nap, or any other game, and generally have a horse for sale, and not unfrequently are stewards at third-rate race meetings. Not unfrequently, too, they have a pretty daughter or two who are ready for lunch in the garrison drag. Many of this class are jackals for money-lenders.

You can convict them of *nothing*, but they *never* lose. Oh! if you knew, my boys, how many of your class, some of them old schoolfellows, who have come and told me their sad tale—simply a tale of wholesale credulity on their part, and wholesale robbery by those whom they thought were their friends. "It is impossible," they tell me, "that Major Blank, of the yellows, could have 'rooked' me; why, he is a glorious fellow, and I lost ninety pounds to him at poker at a very good fellow's house, Mr. Jollyboy, where we dined." It is no use telling the poor youngster that I know all about Major Blank and Mr. Jollyboy, and the Major is never about with men of his own age and rank, but always with youngsters. Alas! alas! it is like the moth in the candle. And *nihil ad rem* to this subject, why on earth *were* moths born to go into candles? Now, if you must gamble, I will give you a recipe. Sit down a party of six

or eight (somehow seven is the best number) who know one another. Shuffle two packs of cards of the same make and colour together, by which means you will have eight aces and thirty-two tens. Buy counters, value sixpence a dozen, and start with five dozen each. Play at vingt-et-un, limit stake to three counters, with leave to anyone who has an ace dealt to him first card, which very often happens, to turn it up and put a sixpence on it, in which case the dealer must double all round; ties to pay the dealer, and each to deal three times running in turn; as you are broke buy counters of each other. You may play all night at this, and if you play fair and quick you won't win or lose a sovereign nine times out of ten, and you will have all the honest fun and excitement of gambling to the very hilt. If I was colonel of a regiment I should like to see this kind of fun going on every night in the winter in the ante-rooms. Brother officers playing with one another come to no harm, and the black sheep in a regiment is seldom a sociable cove—he is playing some game outside or in his own quarters, with some youngster from another regiment perhaps. There is one golden rule, which is, name your stakes at starting, and *stick* to them. The man who wants to play higher is *the* man who thinks he can win—he is not playing for the game but the *money*, and he would rob his own brother. *Per contra*, I never in my life saw high play when someone did not lose his temper, and someone did not go away without a suspicion of sharp practice.

And if you want the fun of betting, do as I have done many a time amongst my own friends, and sit down in a cricket tent and announce that you open a sixpenny book and give or take the odds on anything as it goes on, over by over, and if you don't get some fun out of it it is your own fault, and very little money will you win or lose if you know the game; and if you did the same in half-crowns on the

drag at the races, you would have plenty of fun for your money, and do yourself no harm. Betting money which you cannot command is certain ruin in the end; and the same remark applies to playing cards at high stakes. If men who really gamble played only with notes and gold, and barred I.O.U.'s and cheques, there would be less loss. I have a great respect for Frith's "Derby Day," but I wholly quarrel with his "Road to Ruin." Its moral is absurd, as his hero would go to the dogs anyhow. In the first place he is a spoilt boy at college with a great deal too much money; in his after career he is an overdressed effeminate cad, who would have cried and called in the police if any one "put in one" between his eyes; and in the last scenes he is going to blow out—what he never had—his brains. Hogarth's hero, "Jack Idle," is a much more interesting character. I pity him somewhat, as the sweep with the one eye began his ruin by hussle-penny on a tombstone in church time, and eventually split on him. No, I don't care for greedy, spoilt boys, who had no generous traits at school or at college, and who are mean at heart; but I do shed a tear over fine, manly, generous young fellows, who enter life full of hopes, and from a sensitive abhorrence of being singular or stingy, they touch pitch and are seethed in the cauldron.

If great merchants and bankers were to make a hard and fast bargain with their *employés*, that in the event of their going into a billiard-room within three miles of their place of business, or playing cards or betting in any public place, their engagements would terminate at once, they would do a great kindness to many young men, and real good for themselves, as young men who wanted promotion elsewhere would take a character with them from the fact of their having been in such a firm.

It is useless reminding heads of schools that pot-hunting

and handicapping at athletics is the root of this betting evil amongst many youngsters; they will go on just the same, and the masters' wives will give the prizes and have a large party of ladies; but if I was to publish all the letters which I have received from the first men in England, who have been in their school, university, county, and gentlemen of England's eleven, and in their college and university boats, on this subject, I think the schoolmasters of England, who profess always to have more knowledge of the world than men who have lived in it, would rather open their eyes. Their boys leave them at eighteen years of age, when we make their acquaintance and see their proclivities, and, I am sorry to make the imputation, but I believe it is true, that these pot-hunting athletics are advertisements for many schools. I must wind up with a little incident in gambling, which is one of the greenest spots in my memory It was at an hotel abroad. The rain came down as rain *will* come in a mountainous country, and meant lasting as it did for twenty-four hours. We had breakfasted, and were lounging about in a glass-covered galley, smoking and grumbling, when a Yankee said, "Well, I am miserable, and feel 'very mean'—bring me a large bottle of champagne and a soda water glass, I guess I can do it in twice; and if I'm not more cheerful afterwards, I will have another." Pop went the cork, and landed a few yards off on the cocoa-nut matting. A young Oxford fellow, a stranger to me, who was with a reading (?) party, pitched a *sous* at it. I pitched another. "Have a game of pitch and toss?" he asked. "Done," said I. "Take me in," said a high church curate, who had been climbing mountains, and was in knickerbockers, and a pepper-and-salt shooting jacket and waistcoat, and a white tie—I like a parson who is not ashamed of the cloth;—"and me," says the Yankee, "as I found the cork." For the benefit of the uninitiated,

real pitch and toss means playing quoits with pennies, and the one who is nearest to the cork tosses all the coppers up and pockets all the heads; the next nearest goes on with the remaining coppers, and so each in turn until all the halfpence originally cast turn up heads. In short, we set to work amidst much fun and laughter, and a Frenchman, with his hair cut like a clothes-brush, to whom the game was new, joined us, and a millionaire ironmaster, who had come about a railway contract. Our merriment attracted some of the ladies who looked on half in diffidence, and eventually got easy-chairs and sate by At luncheon the Frenchman was very enthusiastic for "*Encore de peetch and toss Anglais,*" and to it we went again, and some of the ladies joined. All the waiters looked on, the cook came from the kitchen, and the laundresses too. It was great fun, and we had a long argument about a fair or unfair pitch of the ironmaster. I was out of the game *pro tem.*, and it was referred to me, and I gave it against him. The next morning all the party were scattered to the four winds of Heaven, never to meet again—bar two—and the Frenchman took a touching farewell of me. In the winter of '66 I was in Lombard-street, and met someone I thought I knew, and I pulled up, and so did he, and we shook hands: it was the ironmaster, and we had a hearty laugh. "And how did you get through the panic?" I asked—for there had been a tremendous panic. "Oh, all right," he said; "but the ship nearly grounded." And as we parted and shook hands again he called me back and said, "You were wrong about that penny when you gave it against me—it was a fair tail as it fell." So, in spite of intervening trouble and care, that game of pitch and toss left a sunny spot on the ironmaster's memory, as it has on mine.

WHYTE MELVILLE'S SERMON.

When some terrible calamity has occurred—such as the sinking of the Eurydice, the running down of the Princess Alice, an explosion in a mine, the death of the late lamented Princess—we hear that "several ministers of all denominations improved the occasion, and addressed their congregations on the recent deplorable event." In other words, in most cases vain-glorious men, who delight in their own voices, indulged in rhapsodical utterances, and deduced absurd theories from events which had already made a solemn impression on thinking men; and they simply disturbed sad pictures which were for the time indelibly painted on the minds of their audience.

Public bodies, as a duty, are bound to record certain events, and from published accounts they have for the most part—especially in both Houses of Parliament—done what was right, simply and solemnly, and have communicated their votes of sympathy kindly and delicately to the Queen. When the Princess died every man said to his neighbour, "The poor Princess is dead. What a trial for the Queen; and at this time too!" So, when a terrible calamity occurred in the hunting field a short time since, and the

Αναξ Ανδρών was killed, men and women of all classes said, with much feeling, "Poor Whyte-Melville!" and probably ninety-nine out of every hundred who said so had never seen him, and simply knew him by his writings—which were pure, classical, and graphic—as they knew Dickens or Thackeray.

I am going "to improve the occasion," taking for my text one work of *his* only, and that is "Digby Grand;" and I am going to say nothing about the author, and very little about the book, beyond pointing what appears to me to be the moral therein contained to the rising generation. Anyone taking up that book and reading it carefully through can see every rung of the ladder of the *facilis descensus* most accurately delineated, from the moment that Digby Grand, the young hero, of good family and prospects, leaves Eton until he becomes a beggar. He has a fair start enough in a Line regiment, commanded by a sporting colonel, and falls into the hands of a bad companion, Captain Levanter (who is his bad genius through life, and turns out a thorough scoundrel); goes to Canada and enjoys the wild sports harmlessly enough, and eventually joins the Guards in London. He is, perhaps, a little bit of a fop, but manly and simple withal; honourable, well-bred, and straightforward, and mixes with men of good rank and position. There is nothing slang about him, and things go on pretty fairly until he attains his majority and goes to his ancestral home, where great rejoicings are held in honour of the presumptive heir; on which occasion he enjoys "the run of the season" (the description of which makes the blood run quicker in the veins of the most non-hunting man even in England), and winds up his home visit with an interview with his father, Sir Peregrine Grand whom he finds to be involved in great difficulties, and who is furious at his son's wish to marry a charming girl, unfor-

tunately without a portion. He has a desperate quarrel with him, and returns to London. Then comes a most graphic account of fast life in London, gambling, bill discounting, and racing, which lead to his falling into a lower grade of society; his being compelled to leave the Guards and to exchange into another regiment; his arrest for debt on the eve of his leaving England for a staff appointment; and ultimately his lot is ruin and beggary. Having abandoned his title on the death of his father, he meets with an old friend whose rustication at Oxford he had caused most unintentionally; joins him in partnership as a wine merchant; solicits and obtains the custom of some of his aristocratic friends; makes an honest living, and marries his first love, whom he meets again at his partner's wedding.

I wonder how many will say, "What is the use of recapitulating the story of an old novel which was written years ago?" My answer is, "Because it was written for our learning, and I believe the lesson is just as necessary to-day as it was when the book first came out." In that book the author upholds all manly sports and amusements, decries vulgarity and slang men and slang manners, and points out the horrors of gambling. He makes his hero travel, just as many a gambler does now, from rung to rung, to ruin, until he reaches the bottom of the ladder—the exception in Digby Grand's case being that he never loses his innate sense of honour, although he is ruined.

And as it was in the beginning, so is it now going on daily, and for that very reason I have brought, as it were, from Major Whyte-Melville's grave his most admirable sermon. In it he hints at Digby Grand eventually buying back the family property, and dismisses the Hon. Jack Lavish—an impecunious cavalry officer, an intimate friend of Digby Grand, who marries an alderman's daughter to

retrieve his fortunes—in a very humorous manner, thus :—

"I dined with Jack Lavish the night before last at his, or rather his wife's, house, in Tyburnia proper. He has shaved off his moustache, and has grown stout. Miss Goldthread that was is a sensible and charming person, and I think I can trace in her manner a slight and not unnatural distrust of her husband's old friends. Jack says he likes being kept tight in hand, it saves so much trouble, and until he had some lady to own him he never knew to which of his fair friends he belonged. He is still as jovial as ever, but beneath his merriment runs a vein of sound common sense, and in his frank and somewhat dandified exterior exists a warm and benevolent heart."

The real sermon contained in "Digby Grand" is that gambling and bill discounting are simple ruin. And gambling and bill discounting are going on at this present moment to an extent which was never surpassed; for, whereas in days gone by men ruined themselves at Crockford's and the gambling clubs pretty openly, now that gambling is put down by Act of Parliament they are doing it to a far greater extent privately, in all classes, high and low, and on that account the sermon is produced.

Digby Grand and Jack Lavish are as much alive and walking about now as ever they were, and if some of us who are behind the scenes were to disclose our secrets the world would be rather astonished at what is going on. And the worst of the case is that those who in the end come for succour to men of honour are the real good fellows —weak and impulsive perhaps—who have been dragged to their fate by rogues, and they generally come too late. The old story still goes on, and that story is often this: namely, the bill discounters' credit has been exhausted, and an angry father has been tired out. Sometimes it is the

mother who comes in the *strictest confidence;* oftener the sister, who begs and entreats one to get poor Tom, or Jack, or Harry, out of his difficulties. "He is so honest and affectionate," they say; "so kind and obliging; such a noble fellow, but bad companions have ruined him; and all the regiment are so fond of him." This class are very bad witnesses as to facts; the mother is thinking of the curly-headed boy who said his prayers at her knee long ago; the sister, many years younger, is thinking of the eldest brother who almost turned her brain when she first saw him in a hussar uniform, and remembers how—when he got his first leave—that, as regards herself, he never changed; how he went gathering cowslips, or nutting with her in the woods, just as if he was not a soldier at all; and she will tell you that it is impossible that her darling brother had been gambling and racing and is over head and ears in debt, and harassed by infamous Jews. We who are behind the curtain know how debt and difficulties blunt a man's nature. These are scenes of daily occurrence, speaking generally Whose fault is it? A young fellow, utterly ignorant of the world, is suddenly associated with men whose main objects in life are pleasure, and excitement, and gambling, and is dragged into a fiery cauldron, and must get out as he can. What think you of a case, for the facts of which I will vouch, and I will sum it up in a very few words; it was this, and it is one of many: A young officer of a few years' standing, who had been greatly distinguished, left his regiment (a very fast one), in which he could not afford to live any longer, and an opening offering in another line of life, a sister at once advanced the capital—*of course* without security. Being a very honourable young fellow he unbosomed himself to his lawyer, and wished to do everything by his will, and otherwise to secure his sister's money in the event of his death, which, strange to say, occurred within

twelve months. The sister was wisely advised not to administer to the estate until she knew where she was, as there were Jews enough about his chambers in London to make a row of hat pegs, had their noses been used for that purpose, waiting to see what was going to happen. It so happened, that after collecting all debts, there was enough for everyone eventually, including the sister, and the matter was wound up. But how were many of those debts incurred? I *know* the facts to be true. The unfortunate young fellow, being thoroughly good natured and unable to say "No," "*jumped up behind*"—as he expressed it—or, in other words, put his name to bills in India for several hundreds for "one of my best friends in the world, my dear fellow" (Jack or Tom Somebody), "who had *such a heavy book on the Derby* that he got leave home for the purpose of *betting at the post.*" Of course the Jack or Tom Somebody got the money, came home, sold out (being a soldier under the old *régime*), and went to the Colonies; and when the unfortunate victim applied to the family, and proved that he had never received a farthing for himself, the answer was that they had paid too much already. His sister was guilty of a pious theft; and although warned that if she took anything out of his chambers she would be liable as executrix, she confessed that when she saw his medals for the Indian mutiny she could not resist putting them in her pocket, and I saw this close under my very nose, and winked at it. I don't believe the hardest-hearted Jew in Europe would have pressed *that* case, even in his own interest.

And now about these money-lenders. "Digby Grand" simply applies to the army, so to the army we must stick in quoting Whyte-Melville's sermon. Just imagine the present state of things. The moment a young fellow is gazetted he receives circulars from all the harpies in London,

offering accommodation on personal security: it is the same in the navy also. Has not the State some power to rescue young fellows out of the hands of these men, by abolishing all rights to sue officers on full pay for accommodation bills? The system is admirably organised, somewhat in this way: First comes the tempting offer of ninety pounds for a hundred at two months; then, at the end of two months, comes another advance of a hundred, with ten pounds for renewing and ten more for interest on the next hundred, and ten pounds interest on the original hundred; and so it runs on until an unfortunate youngster is bound hand and foot by his creditors. A victim once came to me to rescue him, and the transaction was as follows: Ninety pounds paid down for one hundred, and interest (deducted) for two months. Second hundred advanced for two months, with ten pounds for renewal of first bill, and twenty pounds interest on the two hundred (deducted) for another two months. There were four subsequent renewals at forty pounds each; so that the poor fellow was called on, for interest and renewals, to pay in all cent. per cent.

In private society the well-bred Jews are the most charming people imaginable, hospitable, accomplished, and refined; but the lower division of the nation, who infest garrison towns, are many of them the veriest scoundrels unhung. They frequent young officers' haunts, and do everything in their power to get hold of them and tempt them to extravagance.

The money-lending school consist of very many classes: first come the great operators, who hunt and yacht and keep their carriages and give parties, and fly at the high game, such as young men of fortune who have come into their property, and who form a racing stable and plunge on the turf; and transactions of this kind are done by mortgages and bills combined, the process often ending in the

lender getting the mastery and receiverships of estates. Next come the money-lenders who have private houses, and receive their clients there in a kind, confidential manner; when their patience is exhausted, the open unblushing bill discounter comes in to "do a bit of stiff," and there is no ceremony about this; the borrower chaffs him about his nationality, his jewellery, his nose, and his roguery; all of which the discounter receives with the greatest *bonhomie* and good temper, and both parties fight for terms in the most open manner. When this crisis arrives it is generally a case of "smash up," or being pulled out of the scrape; and this is the stage at which a youngster goes to the family solicitor, and if he goes soon enough he may be saved. The settling with the low Jew class is very amusing, as I happen to know, from having pulled many a young fellow out of difficulties. The discounter is always very civil and often jocular, and sherry and a cigar, from habit, are generally tendered; and something of this kind occurs: "Well, sir, there is no man in the world whom I would so soon serve as Captain A——, but he *was* so foolish—*so* foolish, you know—he was *so* sweet on the favourite that he would back him, and I settled his book, and *lost a deal of money myself too* by taking his advice; but I couldn't see a friend in trouble," &c., &c., &c. And so it goes on until real business is commenced, and then, if the last thing left is a settlement by the "old governor," with a large deduction or a "sell up," it is wonderful how figures diminish, and how glad the school are to get their money back, and five or six per cent. on the loan. Let all the world take this as a fact from me, that the low bill-discounters are too much afraid of exposure to refuse such terms.

Setting aside the bill discounters, see how many vultures live on the army. There is the half gentleman, half any-

thing—no one knows what—who never mixes much with his neighbours in the county, but who has a decent house, a horse or two—which he is constantly changing, as he sells horses to the garrison; with the command of some shooting or fishing, besides being a promoter of local races; a man who knows every regiment which comes, and gets in with the young officers, and meets them by the covert-side, on cricket-grounds and elsewhere, and sometimes dines at the mess; gives them a day's rabbit-shooting, "and a bit of lunch and a game of cards afterwards," as he says. These are the men who live entirely on their wits, and encourage youngsters in every extravagance, and are jackals for the money-lenders.

One of this class died suddenly not very long since, and in his private drawer were found loaded dice, beautifully finished; two or three dozen packs of new cards, the covers of which had all been loosened so as to abstract the pack and put it back again—*ergo*, marked cards; coins in gold or silver with two heads or two tails, as the case might be, and a few other *facetiæ*.

I never knew a garrison town in or near which some one or more of this doubtful class did not exist, I don't mean to say that all men are convicted of having such a useful collection as my deceased friend (?), but I allude to doubtful men who *never* lose.

Upon my word, it seems as if all the scoundrels in Europe were determined, if possible to ruin young army officers. If any good regiment would combine and invite all the advertising money-lenders down on the same day, and at the same hour, and get the soldiers out with the barrack engine and pump over them, and trust to British juries and the British public to see them out of the mischief, what a glorious thing it would be. If heads of military departments would bestir themselves, and induce commanding

officers of regiments to set their faces against gambling and money-lenders, at the same time encouraging all harmless in-door amusements, such as cards and billiards for low stakes, all openly played in barracks before all the officers, how much good it would do. If it was thought "good form" to play *in* barracks, and "bad form" to play *outside*, what a boon it would be too. We should no more see a boy, almost, who knows no more of betting or races than I do, with his betting-book, in the ring, ready for plucking; and we should not lose, as we do now, some of our most promising and dashing young officers who cannot go the pace. There was one glorious instance during the Crimean war, of a gallant young fellow who had gone through the London ordeal to ruin, and who turned up in mufti at the battle of the Alma; saved the life of a former brother officer, when badly wounded himself, and who was reinstated in the army.

And all these remarks apply to a great extent to civilians. How is it that in every railway train a lot of young fellows are playing shilling "Nap," and losing a sovereign, or perhaps two or three, in a half-hour's run? How is it that, in large public billiard-rooms, young fellows are playing pool in business hours? How is that in clubs the whist-room is comparatively deserted in favour of "Nap," or "Poker," or some other game? How is it that in most club billiard-rooms the *habitués* never will consent to play pool for small stakes? The answer is, "Because the spirit of gambling and fast living has seized all classes; and the spirit of real sport, for sport's sake, is comparatively dead." I know, I am happy to say, many good houses where pool and pyramids are played for mere nominal stakes, with counters, and where cards are played also for very trifling sums. Those who are in favour of high stakes play for the money, and *nothing else.*

This is a sermon from Whyte-Melville's best sketch of real life; and, if the moral which he points induces one youngster only who has broken out, or is about to break out, to stay his hand, the gallant author's ghost has not been invoked in vain.

Thackeray believed hugely in "week-day preachers;" in other words, authors who tell the simple story of life: and so, I should think, do most of us.

REASON OR INSTINCT.

THIS is a big question as regards the animal world, and one which never wears out, but, on the contrary, acquires more interest the deeper we go into it. The minds of animals of the higher class are unfathomable, and I feel convinced that, just as all must have experienced in the business world, some good-natured action has often been the means of bringing about some lucrative advantage in after life most unexpectedly; so constant familiar intercourse with the brute creation gives one a pleasure in life which grows with increasing years, and if I was dying, I think I should feel more comfortable if I said good-bye to my dogs. Charles Dickens was very fond of his dogs; and, to my mind, there is more pathos in Hugh, the rough gipsy outcast, on his way to the scaffold remembering his dog, than in the death of little Nell, which, with many apologies to the ghost of Mr. Dickens, I think a murder: "There is nothing more; unless," said Hugh, "any person has a fancy for a dog—and not then unless he will use him well.
He'll whine at first, but he'll soon get over that. You wonder that I think about a dog just now," he added, with a kind of laugh; "if any man deserved it of me half as well, I'd think of *him*." Whyte-Melville said in words all that could be said about a horse in his beautiful song, "The

place where the old horse died;" and some artist—name (of course) forgotten—painted a picture which was in the first left-hand room of the Royal Academy in 1850, I think, called "Near Home." I wonder if any reader happens to have that picture; and if it was engraved. In the background was an old ivy-clad church, and churchyard, with grand old trees, and on a bench sat a venerable old huntsman, pulling the ears of a worn-out old hunter, and by him sat a very old foxhound looking up in his face. Those pictures are sermons for life.

Now reverting to animals. The best friend they ever had was an Irish M.P. who ruined himself, as it was said *inter alia* by fighting the County of Galway against Lord Gort. His name was Martin of Cromartin, owner of Ballynahinch, County Galway. He was the originator of the "Martin Act" for prevention of cruelty to animals, which, passed in 1822, has been carefully fostered and carried on from time to time by the Royal Society for Preventing Cruelty to Animals, than which no more Christian institution exists, for it carries out the first principles of the creation of dumb creatures, the condition precedent to which was that man should exercise his dominion over them with kindness and humanity. Aye, and men and women have learnt, too, that kindness and persuasion are far above the law in protecting dumb animals, as people like Lady Burdett-Coutts, Lord Shaftesbury, and the writers and artists in such works as the "British Workman," "Rab and his Friends," and other dog books, not forgetting Miss Edgeworth's stories of "Little Dog Trusty" and "Lazy Lawrence," in which Jem's horse Lightfoot holds a prominent place, have taught men and boys the benefit of kindness. The Donkey Show alone, which was first held in 1864 at the Agricultural Hall, placed Lady Burdett-Coutts and Lord Shaftesbury on the throne of the coster-

monger world, and the British "moke" thenceforward became the most popular animal in London and all great towns. The song, "If I had a donkey wot wouldn't go"—which was in fashion when I was a little curly-headed boy, working night and day to learn the multiplication table by heart—the prize being a pair of shoe stirrups for my donkey's pad—contained good sentiments too.

Let any one compare the *status* of horses, and donkeys and mules, to what it was nearly forty years ago. Many of us remember the wretched hackney-coach horses; the half-starved beasts in the small coal and coke-sellers' carts; the persecuted donkeys, thrashed and bullied by gentlemen of the Bill Sykes class; the carts drawn by dogs, panting, with their tongues out and eyes half out of their heads; the overdriven bullocks which made Smithfield hideous by night, and which—according to poor Tom Hood's or Cruikshank's lively fancy, I forget which—caused two gentlemen who were represented on the drop at Newgate, with ropes round their necks, as congratulating one another as a mad bull was charging the crowd, "How lucky it is, Bill, that you and I are up here." All these things, thank Heaven, are things of the past, including the gentlemen outside Newgate—on the drop.

Look at the present state of things. I hope the reader enjoys a speaking acquaintance with horses; if not, let them try it, and they will find a great deal of cheap amusement, and please the drivers who are kind to them. When you see the great wagon horses two abreast, and possibly a third "unicorn" in front, go quietly behind the head of one of the wheelers and say, in a soft voice, "And how are you, old man?" Round comes his honest face, and up goes his ears, and his companion gets jealous, which is very charming when he is a comic horse, as many are, and puts back his ears and pretends to bite his friend; and then the

leader turns round and wants to join in, just as a fidgety country parson at a watering place, who is out for a holiday is itching to preach instead of listening to the sermon. And again, with the cab horses, when a hansom driver has driven you smartly up to the station, and you have paid him [N.B.—As a makeweight to all your sins, live so as to be ready to face all the cabmen at the end of the world, for most of them are good fellows], it costs you nothing to pat the horse, and it pleases him; and ten to one the cabman instantly tells you what a good little horse he is, and how he or she once ran third or fourth in some celebrated race, which is often the case. Good nurses are invaluable if they are clever at "baby talk," and horse talk is a great comfort to a horse. There is a man whom I used to notice at the South-Western stables—alas! he is gone, and I never gave him a shilling or "stood him a pint;" he was great at horse talk. One morning a horse which he was grooming slipped his halter and ran up the yard. "Ah! very well, Mr. Billy, you are a gentleman to-day, are you? You'll want your dinner presently, and I shall go for *my* holiday." The horse fairly laughed at the man, who fetched another horse out and began cleaning him, and, when he had finished, the truant came back, and fairly tried to put his head into his halter again. So Billy promised, in fact, to behave better, and was cleaned, and I hope had his dinner. This is reason, far beyond instinct. Circus horses I don't much believe in, any more than in performing lions and tigers, who very often end by biting someone's head off, or walking about with a keeper's arm; but I make a special reservation in favour of the clown's donkey, who nods his head at the mention of the names of great public men, and on Quaker Bright being named kicks the clown in the wind; but this I saw done in a strong Tory town in the good old days of England when the existence of a Deity was a necessary article of faith amongst English

statesmen, and doubtless, had the circus been at Manchester, Mr. Moke's heels would have gone up at the mention of Lord Beaconsfield, and he would have nodded at Mr. Bright's name.

And now about other horses: observe the intelligence of the contractors' horses, which are as colossal as the navvies are. The navvies call them names which would look bad in the "Sunday Reader;" but there is great sympathy between the Herculean bipeds and the great strong horses; they go mostly by word of command, and you seldom see a navvy hard with a horse, which moves apparently at the roughly expressed word, and drags the enormous load of earth to the top of the embankment, and turns it on the second, and clears the truck, and runs round just in time to avoid his hind legs being smashed when they are "tipping." Or look at the race-horse in a training stable under the command of an imp of a boy, whom he could annihilate, and probably he would "savage" you or me if we went near him. It is curious to hear these little fellows, when a horse threatens to kick, rate him with his childish voice, and give him a sharp smack on his hind quarters, and to watch the quiet way in which the horse will let him take up its hind leg and wash it, and when he has done will put its head round and expect the little fellow to make it all up again. I always try to fancy what one of these lad's feelings must be when he sees his favourite coming along stride by stride to the front in a Derby or Leger, and wonder that he does not go mad.

Perhaps the finest draught horses in London are those which occupy the medium between the carriage horse and the cart horse, in the large covered tradesmen's carts, railway carts, &c., which take loads along at a steady trot; and especially the dray horses in Liverpool, which draw goods up and down hill to the docks. These are bred to a great

extent in Lincolnshire and the Midland counties, and very long prices they fetch. The horses look prosperous, and from outward appearances I should say that the whip trade, except for show, must have declined considerably There is a very good custom at Liverpool, and I believe at some other large towns in the North, which is to have a procession of horses on May-day for prizes. And this mention of the whip brings us back to the ante-Martin days. In the second stage of "Cruelty" Hogarth paints his prize villain, Tom Nero,—the last of whom we see on the dissecting-table after execution,—as a hackney-coachman, butt-ending an unfortunate horse which had fallen down whilst bringing four counsellors, who have clubbed their threepence apiece to ride from Thavies Inn to Westminster; in which same picture a bull is tossing a boy, a drunken brewer is running over a child, and a drover beating a sheep to death. Who knows but that Hogarth was the pioneer towards a system of kindness which exists now? Policeman X of to-day would run in "all those culprits;" and things go further, for not only must animals not be beaten, but if carried too closely packed, or sent away without proper food and water, the Royal Protection Society will be down on them.

Now about dogs. For reason the sheep-dog *must* come No. 1, and I think one fact proves it, which is this: In the wolds of Yorkshire and other similar places where immense numbers of sheep are pastured, and outlying sheep get mixed, and there is a dispute about ownership, it is left to a jury of dogs, and the different dogs are collected and pick out their own sheep and separate them, and the verdict is final. The sheep-dog has a purely business mind; in fact, I never saw one at play. I am sorry the old woolly sheep-dog is going out in favour of the colley; but shepherds know best, I suppose. I am afraid of colleys, and my

experience is that to the outward world they are treacherous. Hounds are undomesticated dogs, and are like a great public school; they live together, work together, and have ways and manners of their own, and look down on the general public, though their extraordinary intelligence is shown by obedience to the rating of the huntsman if unruly and the honest answer to his voice when cheered on.

The dog with real reason is the family dog, who always lives about the household. My dogs are a fair specimen of dog-sense, so I preach on them. My favourites now which constitute my canine establishment are a strong, shortish, broad-backed, big-headed black retriever, somewhat like a black bear, "Point," which I bred—his twin brother, "Slip," unfortunately died of distemper—and a Dandy Dinmont, with a dash of the otter-terrier in him, "Rufus," who flew at me one Sunday evening at a railway station, and whom I threatened to "brain," for I was once badly bitten in my life, and am fearful of strange dogs. The dog came to me a minute or two afterwards, and took a lively interest in a biscuit I was eating, and we made friends. His master, to whom I was a stranger, though he knew my name, seeing my wrath had cooled, apologised for his dog's bad manners, and said that his wife would not have a dog in the house and offered him to me if I would give him a home. If any dog ever had a soul Rufus has. He is a favourite with the whole family, and has ways of his own. He sleeps in my son's bedroom, and comes down punctually at 8 o'clock and sits in front of the fire in winter, and in a particular corner of the carpet in summer, and on no consideration will he notice anyone, except to fly at the postman, until 9 o'clock. He listens to every word which is said, and I believe writes shorthand notes of his own. Soon after 9 o'clock he goes with one of the family across the common to the station, and is ordered to return home, which he pretends to do,

but if he is not watched he comes in another way, hides behind the advertisement boards, and at the last moment jumps into the guard's van and turns up at Croydon. He goes out at intervals and fights the grocer's dog, and comes back on three legs and tries to carry it off with a high hand, but you can always find out the truth by asking him if the dog with the gooseberry eye beat him, and if such is the case, he retires in a state of high mental depression if he lost, but if he won he invites you to go out instantly with an eye to renew the fight. Only a few weeks since Rufus had been set on by a large savage dog and badly bitten on the neck, and the dog doctor was sent for. I came home and found him in the doctor's hands, with his mouth tied up, and struggling hard, for dressing the wound caused him a good deal of pain, and the moment he saw me and I held his paw he was as patient as a Christian until it was all done. This must be reason. Rufus never went into the kitchen, and if the family were all out in the evening, he sat alone in the drawing-room, and the gas was lit for him, and if he condescended to go out with a servant, when he came home he went to the front door, and the servant had to go round and let him in. "Point" is an outside dog, and is never allowed in the house under any circumstances, except on Sunday; and on every Sunday punctually at 2 o'clock he comes outside the conservatory, and walks into my room, banging the furniture with his great tail, and puts his honest old head on my knee. I don't feed him, and he simply wants to spend the day with me and if I go out he runs and digs up a large stone somewhere and brings it to me in the garden, and I throw it over a high solid fence into the middle of a large field, sometimes, I am ashamed to say, when my neighbour's meadow is in grass or laid down for hay, and the grass is as high as my hips. The dog has to run a hundred and fifty

yards for an opening in the hedge, and never fails to find that stone, though it is impossible for him to see where it fell; but he always brings the same stone. Sometimes he goes to the River Wandle and dives down and fetches up all the old pots and kettles he can find and lays them in the grass. He is sitting by me now, for this happens to be Sunday, and I have read him the paragraph, of which he thoroughly approves. In fact I always read my articles to myself out loud, and he listens attentively.

The love of big and fierce dogs for children is extraordinary. My eldest son, when a little child of a year old, was with me at a large country house in Ireland, in the Waterford Mountains, and the nurse used to take him into the garden in a perambulator to sleep. There was a big bloodhound which never was allowed to be about except under control, and "Larry," a little gossoon, a hanger-on on the estate, was generally with him, for he could manage him. Larry came running in, "Oh! Miss Mary, Miss Mary, what will I do? The bloodhound has run away into the garden and the child is there." There was no cause for fear; the noble hound was sitting behind the perambulator with his head on the child's shoulder like a sentinel. And very much the same thing occurred at my father's not very long after, when my son was about three years old. He was utterly fearless of dogs, and had wandered out on his own accord, and found a large dog in the yard. The dog was a big Russian kind of mastiff, so savage that he never went out, and was only unchained at night to protect the yard, and no one went within reach of him by day. To the nurse's horror the boy was sound asleep, with his head on the dog, and the dog's paw round him. This was a serious matter, as the moment anyone went near the child a set of teeth, like the guns of a frigate, appeared, and a most disagreeable growl was heard, and nothing could be done

but to call to the child until he woke and came away. Poor dog! I suppose he had a bad name and wanted a friend—what an old, old story that has been in real life with many outcasts.

Now for my cats: the Deuce, a jet-black Tom, only remains. Beelzebub, the wickedest black Tom I ever saw, was probably killed by someone for bad manners, for he was a thorough blackguard, though friendly with me. When they were both alive, the Deuce always came in to dinner at seven, and Beelzebub at nine o'clock to tea; and on a Sunday Beelzebub came punctually at five o'clock to afternoon tea, and the Deuce came at nine o'clock to supper; they never came together, and were punctual to a moment, and they did not come from the kitchen, following a servant, but turned up promiscuously of their own accord. The funniest things I ever saw in the cat world was when a friend of mine brought home a small monkey from the Brazils; it was very tame, and lived in a cage in the dining-room. My then cat—of the pre-Deuce era—a she-cat with a kitten, came in at breakfast-time and saw the monkey; up went her tail like a furze-bush, and she stood on the tips of her claws, her kitten doing ditto; they backed out and fetched the stable cat, and the three proceeded in Indian file to interview the monkey; and at last the foremost cat tapped the monkey's paw, and in a second master Jacko nailed the cat, with his teeth meeting well in her paw. I think reason steps in in a case of this kind, when the cat went and fetched the stable cat, which had never been in the house before, and was, in fact, only on bowing terms with the family. One more word, though, about dogs. A neighbour of mine, who has a trout stream, is generally accompanied by his dog Moses, a large brown retriever, who has taken strongly to the sport. If his master hooks a trout he is in wild excitement whilst he is playing it, and is

mad with glory when he lands it and takes it off the hook, and the dog carries the fish and puts it into the basket; and if he plays the fish and happens not to land it, Moses howls and refuses to be comforted.

Anyhow, whether animals have reason or not, it is a great comfort to know that they are amply protected now, both by law and by common consent of thinking men. Tom Nero butt-ends the hackney-coach horse at his peril; and a costermonger who thrashes his donkey unmercifully finds plenty of his own class to ask him to "put up his hands" on Mr. Moke's behalf. Dog's tails and ears must not be cropped, poultry must not be plucked alive, and calves must not be bled to death; but there is one thing which the Royal Society should look after, and they must fly at very high game, which is to summon the City authorities, who are answerable for the asphalt pavement, for not roughing it with gravel or some other substance in frosty and slippery weather. Money and expense are of no importance as regards the footway for stout aldermen—why neglect the horses? One winter I counted seven horses down near Lombard Street within five minutes, and those which kept their footing were in a lather of sweat from fear. No animal knows better than the horse what he can or what he cannot do, and no animal is more willing to do his best, and to a horse in a two-wheeled vehicle it must be just the same to feel himself slipping with a weight on his back as it would be to any of us to carry as heavy a weight as we could walk under on dry land across slippery ice.

And there are two other evils against which a wholesale crusade should be made: the first is mostly found on Bank holidays and Sundays, and such days, on commons and open spaces, near London especially—which is the cruelty shown to half-starved saddle ponies and donkeys by the owners. Hour after hour these wretched animals are galloped up

and down until they are fit to drop from exhaustion, and frequently they are ridden by great lubbers who weigh them down. The other evil is the wicked overcrowding of carts and wagons on Derby day, Hampton races, and such occasions, when frequently unfortunate horses can hardly crawl before they get half way. The Society ought to have arbitrary power to seize the horses and vehicles and impound them. It is a positive fact that an unfortunate mare was taken out of a cart, and foaled on Banstead downs on a Derby day by the road side, and my son saw it occur.

I have not much faith in foreign missions, there is too much talkee-talkee and platform oratory, but I do believe in home missions, whether the promoters be Roman Catholics, Church of England or Dissenters, for I know that many kind men and women get the confidence of the very poor and are the apostles of humanity. And now for once I will be a home missioner, and respectfully ask the mother of every household where these pages may find a home, to tell the children whenever they see a big rough stone or brick or anything of that kind, especially a broken bottle lying in the road, to remove it to the side of the road in a town and to throw it into the ditch in the country, as the doing so may save many a horse and possibly somebody's life.

ABOUT BREECHES AND BOOTS.

My father took me when a boy at school on my way home for the holidays into the old House of Commons three months before it was burnt down, and the thing which struck me most was seeing some honourable members dressed in top-boots, and wearing their hats. This circumstance, connected with the fact that—as I was informed and verily believe—I was brought into the world by a Wiltshire country doctor who had on top-boots, breeches, and spurs, induces me to think that I have a mission to preach upon that costume. The doctor's story is unquestionably true, as the old nurse told me that the doctor galloped all the way, and was only just in time to meet me, as I made my bow sooner than was expected, and began life by disturbing the family arrangements.

I saw the last pair of tops which ever carried a peer to his seat in Parliament in the year 1846. The members of the Upper House were in that year sitting in the Painted Chamber, pending the completion of their present House, and the owner of the boots was a dear old gentleman, a marquis, name forgotten, who stuck to his leather breeches, top-boots, buff double-breasted waistcoat, blue coat, gilt

buttons, white neckcloth, and broad-brimmed white beaver hat, and drove down to the House daily in a yellow, old-fashioned, high kind of gig with a head, much resembling the vehicle in which Dr. Syntax is represented by Rowlandson as driving Mrs. Syntax home to his vicarage at the end of his third tour. I wonder how many men have "passed out" in honours in classics, mathematics, law, physic, divinity, army, navy, &c., &c., who are well posted up in dates of imaginary deeds, which by courtesy are called facts, out of compliment to so-called history, who have never read, and possibly never heard of, Dr. Syntax's "Tour," the best record by far of some of the rustic life and manners in the days of our great-grandfathers.

Top-boots, similar in principle to those of our grandfathers, were worn in the time of George II., in proof whereof *vide* Hogarth's "Rake's Progress," the gambling-house scene, in which a highwayman is represented as sitting by the fire in a pair of boots with tops made from a turn-over at the top; but our old-fashioned top-boot belonged to George III.'s reign. In many of the pictures of George III. as a young man, he is represented in private life in breeches and tops, the Windsor uniform coat, and a cockade in his hat, such as a footman wears now. No matter about the exact date, the dress is nearly a century old, at any rate. The villainous crew who belonged to Robespierre, Marat, and the Girondists, copied the top-boots from us, and also imported the bull-dog. In fact, from time to time other European nations and ourselves have exchanged articles of dress. We borrowed the Hessians from our foreign neighbours; they certainly were in vogue at the time of the Irish rebellion, as Emmett, the Irish rebel, was painted in them, and were common during the first quarter of this century in the Theodore Hook days. The French copied our "Wellingtons," and I suppose that we are indebted for the

homely blucher, which, like the "Albert hat," was never popular, to our ally at Waterloo, who, after we had won the battle, took the whole credit of the victory, and joined us in the occupation of Paris, and wanted to "loot" the city. The Napoleon boot, or a boot of that character, without the high front, and somewhat curtailed in form, and commonly called "the Butcher's boot," has been common for the last seventy years, at various periods, to the tyrant of Europe, to Mr. Gommersall, who "played Nap," in the battle of Waterloo at Astley's, to our modern hunting-men, our firemen, our soldiers, our butchers, our ostlers, and our bishops. There is a deal of character in that Napoleon boot and its family, according to the wearer. It looks very workmanlike on the hunting-man, the fireman, and the soldier; but when trod down at the heels and looped up to the back of the breeches, showing an interregnum of dirty stocking, and worn by a slovenly butcher or ostler, it has a dog-fighting, beery appearance, and ought to go to the station-house. On a bishop's legs it looks as if it had been consecrated with the horse and saddle at the same time as his lordship, and was part of the trappings of a solemn procession. I don't see why a bishop's boots should not last him until he becomes archbishop, or goes the way of all flesh, as he gets on his horse at his own door, and only walks up the floor of the House of Lords, or of some drawing-room, in them, and nowhere else. I always wish when I see a bishop riding in Rotten Row, which, by-the-bye, is a rare circumstance now, that he would go to Ascot and the opera sometimes, and go the "whole hog." Bishops seem to me to dabble in the shallow waters of Vanity Fair, and want to take a plunge but are afraid. They are somewhat like the strict moralists (?) who put down the cards in the middle of a rubber at midnight on Saturday, but who, if they were sitting up, would not object to play a rubber the

moment the clock strikes twelve on Sunday night. The bishop of bishops on horseback was the late Bishop Wilberforce; he seemed thoroughly happy, and rode as if he enjoyed it; and his horse enjoyed it, too; and he was, moreover, as history says, a rare good judge of a horse. With due deference to the late Lord Houghton, who, speaking of the bishop in the "Fortnightly Review" of last March, says: "He was notoriously fond of riding, and had the reputation of being a good horseman, which was not true, for he rode very loosely," &c., I maintain that the bishop was a very *good* rider, though unfortunately he was killed by his horse stumbling, as were the Marquis of Waterford and poor Whyte-Melville, both fine horsemen. True it is that he had a forward seat on a park cob on the stones, but Lord Houghton never saw him sit a spirited horse in the open. I should be sorry to depend on Lord Houghton's opinion on horses or riders, or even on art or literature, though he fancies himself Mæcenas of all England, and is always more than anxious to play the part in public. I once saw an archbishop in knickerbockers, and what is more he photographed me in profile with a short pipe in my mouth, standing on a rock in the attitude of "throwing a fly." It was in a Highland glen by the side of a splendid trout stream, which I pine after in my dreams. The keeper said the arch*bees*hop wanted some figures on the rock, and he posed us and sat down himself; so we all went down to fame.

In a water-colour sketch which is before me now, "swells," male and female, of the end of the last and beginning of this century are introduced. The St. James's Street dandy, who is arm-in-arm with a guardsman attired in pantaloons and black gaiters similar in size to a Highlander's gaiter of to-day, sports a pair of boots with deep tops, from a little below the knee to the ankle, showing an in-

terregnum of stocking (probably silk). A gallant hussar appears in pantaloons and Hessians, walking with a lady whose feet and ankles, according to now modern custom, are confined by a dress absurdly small at the bottom, and who wears a fire-scoop bonnet, not unlike the fashion of to-day. The dandy top-boot and the country top-boot in the days of our grandfathers were very different things. The story has so frequently been repeated, amongst others by Captain Gronow, that probably it is true, that Hoby, in St. James's Street, on a customer complaining "that his boots had burst the first time he walked in them," exclaimed: "Good heavens, sir, surely you never *walked* in those boots!" There are, or a few weeks ago there were, in St. James's Street some jockey boots—evidently nothing more than a loose, black kind of kid stocking—marked to weigh three ounces only, and I venture to say they would burst if walked in. The home-made country top-boots of our grandfathers were a reality in wild country districts, and were meant for wear and not for ornament, and were of good strong leather, and made roomy enough to receive a woollen stocking, and to allow of the circulation of the blood, and strong enough to turn brambles and thorns in narrow bridle-paths or in a thick covert. Country gentlemen, farmers, doctors, and parsons who kept a horse could not do without their tops and breeches; the parsons sometimes compromised matters by wearing a drab cloth top which buttoned round below the knee and the top of the calf, and which looked less like fox-hunting—not that parsons were averse to hunting, by any means—but the fact was that the farmers, being churchwardens, waywardens, overseers, and filling all the parochial offices, would not spend a halfpenny out of the rates if they could help it except on the main road to the market, and country lanes, which really were parish roads, were left to shift for themselves, and became

impassable in the winter to all but equestrians. The houses were victualled for the winter at Michaelmas, as regarded groceries, flour, and other necessaries, and bacon was laid down, and beef put in pickle in case of accidents, in the event of being snowed out or flooded in.

The Melton men and London dandies were very particular about their boots, and if you look in "Tom and Jerry at Tattersall's" in 1821, trousers were very rare, and you may be sure that Cruikshank was accurate as regarded details. Again, see in "Tom and Jerry" the picture of the Royal Academy, and observe the ridiculous trousers of the period. The two neatest men who ever appeared in riding costume were Jem Mason, the steeple-chase jockey, and a dapper little man, Mr. Rice, the manager and principal rider for Anderson, the horse-dealer in Piccadilly: from his hat to his heels there never was such a picture of neatness, and there was no one in London who could show off a horse in the Row better. He was a witness in the late Chief Justice Earle's Court years ago in a running-down case, in which a valuable hunter had been ruined by a brougham breaking its leg. Of course there was plenty of hard swearing on both sides, as there always is in a horse case, and the defence was that the man on the horse was drunk. On the witness appearing, Justice Earle, speaking to counsel on both sides, in gossip, intimated that the witness was an expert whom he saw every morning. "Yes, my lord," said witness, "I see you ride by every morning." "Yes, yes, witness," answered his lordship, who was very fond of riding, and who had a very bad seat, "tell us, do you think, from his riding, the man was drunk or sober?" "Well, my lord, that is impossible to say. I see your lordship every morning, and did I not know who you are, and your character, from the way that you roll about, first on the pommel and then on the crupper, I should say, 'That old

gentleman has had a little drop this morning.'" Need it be added that the good-natured judge led the Court and spectators in a roar of laughter at his own expense.

As to the little dainty riding-boots worn by ladies, they ought only to be made by poetical bootmakers. You see them in the hands of ladies'-maids, who pass you in a corridor with a giggle as they pretend to hide some other part of female equestrian attire. *Apropos de bottes*, a friend of mine, a very light weight, whose back many a good man has seen in the Leicestershire and Northampton country was staying in a country house during the hunting season. Like many good riders, he was a great dandy about his top-boots, which were standing outside his dressing-room door. On going upstairs to put them on, he found they were gone, and he heard the pattering of ladies' feet in rapid retreat down the passage, and in his dressing-room was a very pretty girl, who, thinking the owner had gone out, had just succeeded in drawing one of them on. My friend, poor devil! was married, and thus the groundwork of a sensation novel was lost for ever.

Country gentlemen and substantial old farmers, who from age or weight had given up riding, were faithful to the breeches, and in their grounds, or on market-days, might be seen in very fine light drab cloth breeches and long gaiters of the same, coming down over well-polished roomy shoes. The last pair of breeches and gaiters I saw in Parliament were worn by Mr. Patterson, member for the City, an old Radical, but a dear, fat, God-fearing old Radical, not one of your foaming democrats of to-day. He always went by the name of old "G—ts and Gaiters," and was very popular, and *Punch* immortalized him by one of his best jokes, "*multum in parvo*—Patterson in smalls." Old Patterson carried the Corn Bill up to the Lords in 1846 as one of the "Message from the Commons," and the late Lord Shaftes-

bury, a plain-spoken old Tory, and Chairman of the House of Lords, a great character in his day, *sotto voce* made a remark in fun about the Corn Bill, which would have brought the roof of Exeter Hall down. I was at the Bar of the House and heard what he said. Sir Tatton Sykes, as I have heard, though I never had the pleasure of seeing that grand old sportsman, always adopted the breeches and gaiters when not in tops.

In books of my childhood, pictures of heroes of crime, such as "Dick Turpin," "Black Bill," &c., the bad man in the "Gipsy's Curse and the Murderer's Doom," and stories of a similar kind, always represented men in tops, yellow breeches, red waistcoats, blue or green coats, and they wore black mutton-chop whiskers. Doubtless Mr. Thurtell had his top-boots on when he drove Mr. William Weare down in a gig, and cut his throat, near Elstree, though the ingenious Madame Tussaud, who, for the instruction of future generations, exhibits the old gallows which she bought from the authorities of Hertford Gaol, when public executions ceased, represents the figure of Mr. Thurtell stepping to his doom, attired in the drab breeches and gaiters, which I claim as an emblem of respectability. Highwaymen, who always were hung in uniform, doubtless went off the ladder in their tops and boots, which, so to say, were "treed" at Tyburn or some suburban gallows.

Individuals were styled after their boots; *crede* Dickens in "Pickwick"—"*Who* is there in the house?" said Sam (Weller). "There is a wooden leg in No. 6; there's a pair of Hessians in No. 13; there's two pairs of halves in the commercial; there's these here painted tops in the snuggery inside the bar; and five more tops in the coffee-room."

From what I remember of post-boys of the past, I fear their boots and breeches were seldom found in the attitude of prayer. They lived a very hard life, often com-

mencing the world as hangers-on in a stable, and sleeping in their clothes on the straw. Their manners and language were not always agreeable, and their demands were excessive; their evidence in courts of justice respecting runaway matches, smuggling affairs, prize-fights, elections, and so on, were *not* received without much cross-examination, as their memories were the longest or the shortest, as occasion served. They were the bad men of female authors' moral story books, though I remember a quasi-tract called "John the Post-boy," which pictured an imaginary hero who never rode on a Sunday unless he satisfied himself that the job was a work of necessity, and who always read the service to himself at leisure hours, if he missed church. There *might* have been one or two such post-boys, but I do not think they fairly represented their party. I wonder by the way that tailors do not reproduce a very useful part of the old post-boy's dress, which consisted of double-milled cloth overalls, perfectly weather proof, which came from the hips to the ankle over the boots, and far superior to any indiarubber.

I remember a very wicked pair of tops in the dock at Bow Street in 1842, after Ascot. The owner was a stout, oily-faced man, with a juicy mouth and prominent front tooth, dressed in blue and brass, buff waistcoat and cords, who, in company with two others, very respectable-looking men, had robbed a man of colour of some hundred sovereigns, watch, chain, rings and jewellery, on the road to and from Ascot, and on the course. The late Mr. Lewis got them off for want of jurisdiction, as the prosecutor, who was hazy and frightened at cross-examination, could not swear to any particular offence on the course within the magistrate's jurisdiction.

The owner of the tops was at Epsom in 1843 with the same companions, and invited me to join him at thimble-rig, and offered to go ten pounds for us both if I would

deposit my gold watch. I was under twenty years of age, and young-looking for my age, too, and I shall never forget the man's face when I quietly asked him, "Who robbed the black man at Ascot?" His language on being so "picked up" by a boy would really have startled Old Nick; it was overheard by a gentlemanly-looking man with a quick eye, who simply said, "You are at your old games, are you? off the course, or I shall want you directly." Need I say the speaker was a detective?

If the little tops and breeches which were worn years ago, when every London dandy had his cab and tiger, could have written their autobiographies, what stories we should have of cabs waiting at houses of "other fellows' wives," outside Crockford's, or at private hells, at Chalk Farm or Wimbledon Common at daybreak, whilst the noble owners were making targets of each other; of journeys to and from Richmond with pink bonnets, and numberless other "fie-fie stories," only mentioned now by gray-headed old gentlemen over their wine when the youngsters are out of the way, or by wicked old dowagers—who possibly were behind the scenes—at early tea in Mayfair.

The last remnants of top-boots in cockney life belonged to the low sporting school. Ben Caunt was fond of appearing in public in white cords and tops, green cutaway, basket buttons, scarlet neckcloth set off by a large gold spread-eagle pin, presented to him by Freeman, the American giant, and a broad-brimmed white hat with green eaves; in fact, his portrait taken in that costume was in a shop window in Fleet Street, in which he was represented as pointing to a table, whereon were placed a champagne bottle and glasses, and box of cigars, and "Bell's Life," and underneath the picture was a valuable certificate: "This is the best portrait of me. B. Caunt, Champion of England." Old-fashioned omnibus men and coachmen who drove the short stages to

and from the suburbs clung to the tops until they passed away.

And now for the cause of the appearance of this gossiping paper. It occurred thus: On the Oaks day I met an old friend, who was riding across Mitcham Green, with whom I have had many a chat on many a cricket ground, and whose name I do not know, who always wears top-boots, spurs and cords, and whom I never saw in the streets or in the country or in the suburbs except on a good horse. I know he is not a dealer, nor does he ride horses to sell. I was laughing with him about his tops, and told him that I never remembered an Epsom week in which I did not see him on the way to the races or coming back, or on the course, and he said that he had been—I think—for thirty-nine years in the same dress. There was another thing which put the subject into my head, and it was this: On the 29th of May last, the anniversary of a day some two centuries and a quarter ago, or thereabouts, when Charles II. was "first for the oaks," after his father had lost a crown by "a neck on the post," there was cricket at Lord's between two elevens, most of whom, from boyhood upwards, have almost lived in breeches and boots. The players were the huntsmen and the jockeys. I was very doubtful about the "Jockeys and Huntsmen's" match which we all remember took place on the Saturday in Derby week. I fancied there would be a lot of loafers, and especially our friend "'Arry, the Cockney Cad," who "knew old Georgy Fordham and Freddy Archer, my boy," and "five-to-one-bar-one school." It was "very much t'other," and proves exactly what I always have maintained, which is that the betting ring don't care a straw for anything but the money. As to the match, "Bell's Life" has a most elaborate and accurate account of it, which any one can see. As regards the cricket, naturally amongst the huntsmen there were many men heavily handi-

capped by age, and some of them were stiff. There was some very good play on both sides, especially the bowling, in proof whereof between 300 and 400 balls were bowled for four wides; and the wicket-keeping was good also, and, seriously speaking, the Surrey and Middlesex counties, whose match was broken off to make way for the "knights of the pig-skin" and "the honourable company of horn blowers," might very advantageously have borrowed two bowlers from the equestrian elevens.

Everyone who knows anything about cricket and about the man must be aware that, but for his professional engagements elsewhere, R. I'Anson would be a great acquisition to the County of Surrey, being *much* superior as an all-round man to a large majority of those who play for it now, as he can bat, bowl and field *really* well, and can keep wicket on a squeeze, and is passionately fond of the game.

Now for a glance at the ring at Lord's. There were five thousand people at the least, at one time, a large proportion being men of mark of the Nimrod stamp, and women of mark, too, half-sisters to Diana Vernon, in four-in-hands, mail phaetons, carriages, on horseback, &c., &c., a great many genuine cricket lovers, and a large sprinkling of those connected with racing and hunting, more of the former than the latter, as naturally racing men of all counties had been attracted to Epsom. The dirty short pipe and cabbage-leaf cigar were absent, and there were so many ladies about that it became necessary, when one wanted a quiet pipe, to get into an out-of-the-way corner. No rough word could be heard anywhere, though there was plenty of fun and laughter. In fact, the match consisted of fair cricket, which a great number of people of all classes were watching, with real pleasure, a game between two elevens out for the day, who were playing for the love of the sport

and a summer holiday. All the "horsey world" were off the stage for this day. One could not mistake the trainer with his wonderfully neat hat, well-trimmed hair and whiskers, or clean-shaven face, carefully tied neckcloth, rather long frock coat fitting exquisitely, rather light drab trousers coming over a boot polished with a blacking only known to themselves—I expect those who clean their boots "hiss" all the time, as if grooming a horse. Trainers also are especially recognisable by the quick, restless eye, which betrays no expression of thought, but notices everyone from an archbishop downwards, for fear he should be a tout. Then the first-rank jockeys always betray themselves by their neat little figures, well-cut clothes, dogskin gloves and excellent cigars—where do they get them? I can't get them at the club. A few knowing stable-boys would have looked happier, perhaps, with a little ground ash stick in their hand, and a fox terrier at their heels, but all were "off the stage" for the afternoon, and the little sticks and little dogs were left at home. I saw M'George, the starter, pass through them once or twice, but they looked as if they had never seen him before, or had ever been anxious for a start. The huntsmen were scarcer and less recognisable most of them. One hardly ever sees a huntsman except in his professional clothes, whereas jockeys and trainers swarm alive on railways which run to and from a racing district, and very pleasant companions they often are. To review the match shortly: 1, the cricket was very fair; 2, all enjoyed themselves; 3, the match must have been a great financial success; 4, those of the press who prejudged the question and talked about "burlesque cricket," &c., &c., &c., for once in their lives were *wholly* wrong, and as our friend 'Arry, the slang cad, would say, "the 'untsmen 'ad a fast thing that day with blood at the hend," and the jockeys "sat down on their 'orses and walked

in as they pleased," and as regards the Revilers, who ran *against* them as far as *they* were concerned, they weren't in it, "it was all a 'orse to a 'en" on the day's sport *versus* failure.

THE COUNTRY PARSON.

THOSE who have had to make their own way in the world must call to mind times and seasons in their younger days when the stress of business occasioned their burning the midnight oil, night after night, and frequently not "dividing the Sunday from the week," for weeks or months together. In the days when my lot was cast in the midst of a very hard-working world, at the time of the railway mania, I was fortunate enough to be "*semper* welcome" at more than one country vicarage, if I could get away on Saturday evening; and, although a hot London church would have been unbearable, the quiet village Sundays were periods of rest which I recall with much pleasure. There was no need to be awakened on Sunday morning. A tree full of birds close to the window kept up a chattering early enough, and the sun shining in, and the cawing of the rooks, and the tramping of the cart horses going to water, and impertinent bees who flew in at the open window and levied toll on the flowers which stood on the table, to say nothing of the church bells, which rang at 8 o'clock, made sleep impossible. And who ever wanted sleep on a fine June morning?

It used to be a great treat to find that I was the only idle man on the parson's busy day, though the time never

hung heavy for a moment. Sometimes we began with a wedding at eight, the Sunday school after breakfast (at which I only assisted occasionally as Mr. Spectator, listening to some of the primitive answers*), church at half-past ten, a chat for half an hour before with the patriarchs, who represented the House of Lords amongst the villagers, sitting about the blacksmith's shop in the week days, and occupying the posts of honour on the benches under the old yew-tree in the churchyard on Sundays. One of these fogies sometimes might be a Trafalgar man, or a Peninsular or Waterloo veteran, and better company I never met. Then came the early dinner at one, church again at half-past two; after church a walk round the parish with the parson, who went to see some very old parishioners who were too feeble to come out, and to read to them a little out of "Pilgrim's Progress," which is to the aged poor what "Robinson Crusoe" is to a school-boy; pending the reading whereof I would drop in and pay the churchwarden a visit, and sit in his chimney-corner—which held six, three each side—and have a glass of his strong beer and a quiet smoke with an old shepherd, who always "rested on his way home;" in other words, had his pint of strong home-brewed regularly every Sunday—accompanied by his rough sheep-dog, a stout churchman, who always slept in the pew and never barked in his sleep, and who never looked in vain for some scraps in the churchwarden's outhouse. Then about seven came a tea and supper combined, which makes me hungry to think of now. And I think that parson, who had done eleven hours' honest work, aided and abetted by his wife and daughters, who taught in the school and

* A country parson once told me that when his class could not remember the shepherds as the first recipients of the great Christmas message, he asked who were likely to be in the fields by night, and one lively village bucolic eagerly answered "the poachers."

managed the singing, had fairly earned his leisure and his pleasant evening chat and cigar, and a quiet perusal in "Bell" (which I always took with me) of the cricket or rowing of the past week. This is not a theological treatise, and if I attempted to make it so there would be a just and indignant howl; but I fancy that most of the readers are in accord with me, that a good country parson is the salt of the earth, and that nine sensible people out of ten, except the ecclesiastical lawyers, think that the columns in newspaper reports of religious squabbles about shadows are evidence of wicked waste of money and fanatical temper. And although every word of this paper is true and from the life, it is not a sketch of A., or B., or C., but of a class whom I have been fortunate enough to know, and of scenes which I have witnessed.

First, as to our congregation. There was the conventional bore, who exists everywhere, *the* most *respectable* man in the parish, who made a lot of money somehow, and always came to church in shiny black *dittos*, and a shirt frill (like Mr. Chuck's, in "Peter Simple"), and stiff white neckcloth, who said "the minister did not preach the gospel," and who encouraged the ranters, and bellowed out the psalms, emphasising any damnatory clauses with a wave of the hand and a satisfactory shake of the head. The squire's family of course occupied one enormous pew, reached by steps, with armchairs and a fire-place, and every convenience of a club, except the morning papers; a second large pew held the *upper* servants, and there was an inferior pew for the under female servants, with benches for coachmen, grooms, gardeners, &c., outside. (Of course this state of things has long since ceased to exist.)

Then came the farmers' families, the younger portion of whom always expected me to make them a "clown's face" just before the Litany—and were never disappointed—

though often reproved by the elder sisters, who were not much displeased when the London stranger nodded his head seriously and winked an apology. Another pew was occupied by the blacksmith, a hale man of seventy without a grey hair, looking noble in a black velveteen coat, and a shirt-collar like a sail, and a "bird's-eye fogle" tied once round, showing the neck of a perfect Hercules; and in the same pew was an old superannuated huntsman, who looked as if he was always feeling for the horn, with his hair close cropped and white tie with long ends, a fox's head for a pin, and a long frock-coat, breeches, and mahogany tops. And next the old huntsman sat the blacksmith's daughter, a snake-headed one, with jet black hair and blue eyes, and the smallest of ears like shells; and next to her the under-keeper, a fine Yorkshireman, who shared her book, attired in a brown velveteen coat, and bronze buttons displaying every kind of dog's head. And we were not surprised when their banns were put up, and the old huntsman gave Vulcan a dig in the ribs, and we all looked round at the handsome couple, and should have had much pleasure in giving three cheers had it been decent. No wonder that the old village poacher's place was empty, for you may be sure that some hare suffered that day. It was quite time that the banns were put up, for I saw, a few weeks before, the young keeper and the blacksmith's daughter trying to catch a pony in the orchard, and never were two people so long about a simple job; and when the pony was caught the captors' heads were as close together as the two-headed nightingale's. I should like to have had hand in catching that pony, for the reward was *very* ample remuneration for the trouble.

It was rather sad to see the numbers of very old, old people who evidently could not read in those days, though they had a simple creed of their own, as besides the cardinal

points of religion, they believed in the squire, the parson, the devil, the gallows, and ghosts. For they lived in the days when wicked boys and girls were taken to see the men go in a cart to "Hang Fair," and believed that many ghosts walked, and that certain corners were bad to pass at night. But I will trouble you to find a man who could burn a pig, throw down a tree, or take a swarm of bees like "Old Joe." To see him burn a pig; didn't he wet his finger to see which way the wind was, and arrange the straw so artfully that every bit of the hair was taken off "wi'out burning a hole in his breeches anywhere," as he said. Why, the pig, within an hour of his disease, was like a beautifully coloured meerschaum, and it would reconcile anyone to cremation, if it was not carried further. The old man only professed to do three things, viz., "to tack bees," "vall a tree," and "singe a hog," and he did all three things well, though he never learnt to read or write.

It required some effort to keep one's countenance, when the church was chilly, to see Farmer Jemmy, by way of protection to his head, put on a fustian cap with a shade, which he had bought at a fair, and decorated with crossed guns and dogs' heads. He was a grand old boy who, as he said, "went to bed wi' the buds (birds) mostly, and got up wi' the buds; who lived in his kitchen and swung the pot;" in other words, gave dinner-parties, one of which we shall enjoy presently. We often had an interlude in the shape of a raid on the schoolboys by the master after a contraband apple, which had rolled out and had been recovered, and could not be found, and a lot of heads were punched and ears boxed on suspicion, probably the innocent suffering for the guilty. The plough-boys and farm labourers generally stared into vacancy, and clattered in with their hobnailed boots, and clattered out again. Remember, I am speaking now of the dark ages years ago, when farmers

employed every village urchin bird-keeping, or as odd boys, and parsons were unheard and unheeded almost as regarded education, and could only fight against ignorance in the Sunday schools.

I wonder how many sectarian sermons of all kinds I have heard by "popular preachers" (that odious expression) since those days, and how many I remember, or which I cared twopence for; possibly none; but I bear in mind many of those village sermons now, when men stood up, and in their natural tone told a short story under twenty minutes, and represented the *dramatis personæ* of sacred history, walking and talking as they probably did in life; though one parson made the deadest failure I ever knew in trying to say a few words about the late village cobbler and parish clerk (who had been clerk for half a century) on the Sunday after his funeral. He started as brave as a lion, but he came to utter grief in a very short time; for were not the old clerk and the parson sworn friends? and didn't those two and your humble servant once dig an old woman's grave?

This occurred in October, when the ground fortunately was soft, and it occurred thus: A very old woman, Sukey ——, was dying, and the parson used to see her every day. We were going out shooting, and on the way the parson called to see how the old woman was, and heard, without surprise, that "she had just passed off like a lamb." This was on a Monday, and the people asked if she could be buried at four o'clock on Saturday; so to save them the trouble of sending to the clerk, the vicar said he would let him know about the funeral. On the Saturday we were out shooting again some way from home, and the parson said, "We must go back; I have to bury old Sukey —— at four. By-the-bye," he added, "did you tell the old clerk about her grave?" The terrible fact came before us that no grave had been dug. Back we posted, and found the

old clerk soling a boot. *Q.* "Have you dug old Sukey's grave, George?" *A.* "Never heerd about it, zur." *Q.* "What's to be done?—it is now three." *A.* "Don't rightly know, zur; there be no one at home but me." There was only one thing to be done; and a man was sent on horseback to put the funeral off till five, leaving us two hours. The old clerk took his tools down behind the church tower, out of sight, to a spot where no one had been buried within living memory. We prospected with the boring-irons as quickly as possible, the clerk's little grand-daughter fetching someone to toll the bell, and we three stripped to our shirts, and in an hour and a half dug as good a grave as anyone could desire; and if ever I did enjoy a pull at the beer, it was in the vicarage when the job was done. At five o'clock all were in their places, and no living soul but ourselves ever knew who dug the grave.

We must dine with "Varmer Jemmy," after all this talk. He always used, out of compliment to me, as the Londoner, to dine *late*, and our dinner was at twelve, instead of eleven A.M., his usual time.

Old Jemmy was one of those curious characters whom one seldom meets now. He was a hale and hearty octogenarian, whose hours in bed were from 7 o'clock P.M. to 5 A.M. in the winter, and from 8 till 3 in the summer. Besides his farm he dealt in timber, and had a saw-pit, and contracted for farm buildings, always making money and never spending it, hardly ever away from home, kind to the poor, finding odd jobs for the men in the winter, and very hospitable. He lived alone with an elderly female servant who was near seventy. Jemmy was very warm in the pocket. He trusted only to a canvas bag and specie, and probably never had a cheque-book.

Our banquet-room was in the large bricked kitchen (for Jemmy only used his parlour when ladies came to see him),

before an enormous fire-place, where, winter and summer, the logs were smouldering on the dogs. The party consisted of his brother-in-law the churchwarden, "Varmer Guy," who could never get within two feet of the table, owing to his corporation, a nephew or two, the parson and myself, and old Charlotte, who cooked the dinner, waited and joined in the conversation, and cheered us on. The table-cloth was like the driven snow, and, if you please, there were heavy silver spoons and forks for the visitors; and as to the dinner, it was so good that on the night before old Jemmy's party we used to sit up very late so as to ensure sleeping till eleven the next morning, in time for a tub, a cup of coffee and a pipe, but *no* breakfast; for it would have been a shame to have gone without an appetite. As to roast spare-ribs, chines, chickens, ducks, asparagus, peas, and all the best farm and garden produce, gooseberry pudding, and cream, the table literally groaned; but the wary and wise kept a place for the boiled ox-beef—the Martinmas beef, I presume, which Macaulay speaks of—beef which had been kept in pickle and preserved for months. Probably it was the beef of oxen which had been at the plough and fatted, but nothing ever beat it. And the wise and wary likewise held aloof from the strong beer, and took the lighter ale, and reserved themselves for one glass of the celebrated home-brewed, the colour of sherry, which flared like brandy in the fire, with some cheese which was worthy of the feast. And when a man had done his duty by all this, if he was not content with a quiet smoke in an arm-chair and one more glass of the strong beer, he did not deserve to live—that's all.

Although, especially as regarded education, things are changed now, much of the primitiveness still remains. "How do you manage to get on with everyone so well?" I asked the parson—who is still vicar—not very long ago,

"By minding my own business and trying to do my duty," was the answer. "As you know, I was never meant for the Church, but this was a family living, and I had it; and when I began I liked the country, and liked the hunting, but I very soon found that a man who is a man ought to do his work; and plenty I had to do. The farmers were mostly fond of hunting, and were not sorry to see that I went to the meet once or twice a week, but I found that some of them were very loose, and very hard on the poor; and they soon discovered that I didn't care about their market-ordinary tales and flash stories, and though I enjoyed a run with the hounds, I meant to do so like a gentleman. Some of the magistrates were very hard on the poachers—not your London gang men, but the unfortunate half-starved fellows who found a snared hare and pocketed it; and what with talking to one and another, and a kind word here and there, I got on without quarrelling. And then, thinking I ought to teach in the school, I got accustomed to it and fond of it, and liked the village children. The secret of leading people is easy enough, if you make up your mind that they won't be driven. I took an interest, too, in preserving the foxes, and consoled the old women for loss of ducks and chickens; and the magistrates set that off against my pleading for the small poachers and putting in a word or two for a misdemeanant, pledging myself for his better behaviour. But I attribute my success principally to one thing, which is this: I set my face against meddling and faction and sensation, and, although often urged to have anti-papal meetings, and evangelical alliances, and heaven knows what besides, by all kinds of people, I kept aloof from them all. Some clerical secretary wrote to me a long time since, and said the bishop expected all his clergy to petition against opening the British Museum and similar places on a Sunday, and sent me a petition deploring "the

desecration of the Sabbath by the lower orders, and praying that no places of entertainment should be open on a Sunday;" and I replied, that I knew nothing of the wants of London, and sent the petition back, altering 'lower orders' to 'higher orders,' and praying that Tattersall's, the hotels at Richmond, Blackwall, and Greenwich, the parks for carriages of the rich, and such places, should be closed on a Sunday, with a request to the bishop to present *that* petition—which, of course, he never heard of even. Then, too, there were some village revels which were village drunks; and, though there was much obstruction, particularly by the young farmers, we have gradually substituted a good flower-show, athletics—in which I was supported by a fine young fellow, son of a late well-known London prize-fighter—winter concerts, and those things, and they all like them now. In short," he said, "if the world would read the story of the pharisee and the publican every morning, and act on the moral, and believe that all people are fallible, things would come right of themselves; and so long as a man has the courage to face the big men manfully, and to be firm and kind with the poor, and not pretend to be over-righteous, both will respect you. 'Always disarm a man' is my motto. The other day a busybody had a London sermon—a layman and a great Exeter Hall light—down to preach in a barn on a Sunday, and no doubt thought he could annoy me. I called on the Londoner instantly, and threw no impediment in his way, for the man behaved like a gentleman, and did not preach in our church hours, and he was perfectly astonished to find that I was not afraid of his competition. Another day, a 'dissenting minister,' as he called himself, whom I never saw before, came and personally attacked me about hunting and about the 'Burials Bill,' and said that I was one of those who wanted to keep him and his flock out of the churchyard; and I told

him that I would bury him and all his flock for nothing when they were ready, and that shut *him* up. Half the mischief is done by giving a dog a bad name. When a poor fellow has got into a scrape, the best thing is to give him work, like old Jemmy does, and let him get his character back. Why, look at that splendid horse-artilleryman, whom you saw in church, and who paid me a visit afterwards. That fellow was the greatest scamp in the place, always drinking, fighting, and poaching, and when he enlisted I persuaded his old mother, who was a little above the world, and who would have sold everything to raise the money to get him off, to let him have his own way; and he told me that the sergeant of his company, or battery, prophesied his fate at once—that he would either be flogged or make a good soldier; and he said he found his master directly, and was determined to go straight—and so he did. Being fond of horses, he soon became a favourite, and he has never been in trouble, and is now a corporal. Bullying and psalm-singing would never have done for that fellow; and, take my word for it, that the kind word in season is a power of strength with all Englishmen. Promote their good, and above all things their amusements, and give up lecturing them morning, noon, and night, as if we were wholly immaculate and they were all wrong, and all will go well. Look at the charity of the poor, and see how much they do out of almost nothing, and don't let those who go to parties and clubs in London be always throwing the public-house in their faces. A poor man who gets an unexpected pot of beer always hands it round to friend and stranger. Do we do the same?"

Now, all is from the life, and the moral is simple enough. I suppose you have observed that the old-fashioned village parson is very much supplanted often by cockneys of a lower grade, very many of whom have not only not had any

university education, but are not gentlemen in manner or feeling, and who are wholly incompetent for country parsons. Some of these clip the Queen's English and talk about 'oliness and 'eaven; some of them, especially in suburban parishes, make cliques among rich, vulgar people, who live for show and originate mission meetings and temperance meetings, and pepper people with stupid tracts —all one-sided—with reference to the immorality of the poor, whose ways and manners they never understood, and whose amusements they don't support, though at their own homes they are not above lawn tennis and claret cup, which answer to the "beer and skittles" of the poor. They are ready to go to extravagant stupid parties, and insist on all people being *very* good on "the sabbath," and are horrified at a parson playing a quiet rubber, or enjoying a run with the hounds, or dancing, or going to the theatre. And why? Because they are muffs who can do nothing and have no taste. What would they have said to the late Bishop Selwyn's wish for the clergy to start theatres in large towns for bringing out good plays for the edification of the people?

They are always wanting to start something new, but won't use the materials they have. They will wake up some fine morning and discover the Church to be in real danger, and will be surprised to find that people will put their hands quietly in their pockets and tell them it is their own doing and they must save themselves, and that the only places *in* which the real support will come, and *from* which it will take a hard fight to drive Mother Church, are those in which the parson is the friend of rich and poor, one of themselves, and living amongst them, recognising and taking part in all, which, properly enjoyed, is harmless, and setting the example of goodness and toleration.

A sporting parson and a parson who is fond of sport are two very different beings. The man who is constantly drinking and card-playing with his farmers loses their respect and his own; but one who appears at the covert-side in his black cut-away and white tie, or in the village match, and says grace at the cricket dinner, is the right man in the right place, and does a deal of good by his presence, and makes his mark on Sunday, you may be sure. Men like Charles Kingsley, the bold rider, who set his face against vice, and who went to poor old Cuffey, the Chartist,* because he had no friends, and acquainted himself with the Chartist grievances, are of the right stamp, too; and so are some of those splendid parsons, old university oarsmen and cricketers, who understand roughs and work amongst the costermongers and the lowest of the London poor, unseen and unknown, who look at poverty and crime as their battle-field. So are some of those on the mission to seamen who go out to ships in the roadsteads in the worst winter weather, one of whom, in advocating the cause of his mission, said, "they only asked for food and shelter, and assured his hearers that some of their body were so poor, that the fishermen and boatmen on his station sent anonymously a pilot coat and a tarpaulin suit for the parson." And don't let us forget the late Bishop Selwyn, formerly of New Zealand, and afterwards of Lichfield, who went on board of a frigate in the Pacific, against the prejudice of the sailors, and won all their hearts when they found that he could pull as good an oar as they could, and could sail a lugger as well as themselves. And when his cruise was over, and he said a few kind, manly words, the crew asked leave to man the yards and to give him a parting cheer.

* Cuttey was a Mulatto and Chartist leader, who had two year's imprisonment under the Treason Felony Act.

If a voluntary church on the same principle as voluntary church rates is ever mooted, there is no fear for good old country parishes or places (which have been unpolluted by morbid fanatics who are all talk) in which well-educated gentlemen profess to be men, like their parishioners, are the parsons.

I PREACH TO THE PARSON.

"IT is no use telling me that it is a harmless amusement," said the parson. "I will be bound to say that your cricketers are in that room there at the Green Lion, drinking and playing cards now, as I hear they are every Saturday evening; the police ought to indict the house."

We were passing the Green Lion, a good old-fashioned village inn, in which the principal common room was bravely lit up, and from the shadows on the red blind there evidently was a numerous company.

"Now look here, parson; you go on, and I will come in presently, and tell you who are there and what they are doing; for I want to speak to them about a match next week. I shall find most of them there."

The parson walked on to the vicarage, and your humble servant went through the bar into the common room—or, more strictly speaking, the *un*common room, as it was only for the use of the landlord's regular customers, and strangers could not get in—and was greeted with a chorus of "Good evening, sir; what's the news?" Not to spin out this article with "padding," as is the custom in three-

volume novels, let me say that the news was that a match was made, that an eleven was wanted, and, according to ancient custom, a gallon of shandy-gaff was ordered in and paid for to drink success to the eleven; and that being done, the writer, having arranged the match, returned to the vicarage to report as promised.

In this article I shall make the parson wholly a listener. It must be understood that the Vicar and Mrs. Vicar too were bombarding me with hot shot all the time, but conversations in print are tedious. The talk, or whatever it may be called, is a repetition of arguments which I have had with very good men, who were cut the wrong way of the stuff—I fear with *no* great success—in hopes of inducing them to see the urgent necessity of looking after the village sports, and getting at the people who delight in them.

"You are quite right, vicar," I said on entering; "most of the cricketers are there drinking, smoking, and playing cards, and I have stood them a gallon of shandy-gaff, and of course you say I set them a terrible example. The company present were, the landlord, the keeper, the bailiff's son, and the beadle, who were playing four-handed cribbage, a penny a corner and fourpence on the rubber; which means sixpence for a rubber of two games won, fivepence for a rubber of three games, and the stakes were all spent on shandy-gaff. The others are talking cricket, and some of them watching the card players, and bets of a pint, or even so much as a pot, were given and taken whilst I was there. I know all the company, and they were very pleased to see me; they are all most respectable men, who work hard and are sober and well-conducted; and what you say is true, they are *always* there every Saturday night, and probably will be there for many a year as long as the present landlord goes on. It is quite true, as you say, that few of them ever come to church, and that they hardly recognise you

when you meet them; but they touch their hats to me because I stand them beer. And there you are just wrong; it is *not* the beer, it is because my friends and myself get up the cricket, and readings and concerts, and so sometimes amuse them in the winter; and pardon my home truths, your party do not inaugurate a single amusement amongst them to gain a laugh from New Year's Day to the following 31st of December. The fact is, parson, you do not understand what *you* call "the working classes," for the simple reason that you were brought up in a cockney parish in London, and don't understand village folk. You go on circulating tracts on drunkenness and gambling, directed against men such as I have seen to-night. Now listen to me. My friends and myself have been with those men—for players or non-players they are cricketers to a man—at home and in out matches, and there is not a man amongst them with a tendency to drink. They hold their Saturday night club at the Green Lion regularly from eight till half-past ten, and as regularly they play penny cribbage and talk village politics or cricket; in fact, the match which I announced to-night will keep them going till it is time to go home. I know all you say about putting the money by in the savings-bank instead of going to the Green Lion, where probably each man will pay sixpence or eightpence; but do you talk so to your richer neighbours, when you go to their dinner-parties and get indigestible green peas and young potatoes in early spring, which are mostly imported from the south of France and Algeria, and all sorts of extravagances and expensive wines, which are produced for show and not for hospitality, and the money spent on which *might* go to the poor? You have no idea how readily these Green Lion men would rally round you if you would give them the chance, and showed them a little sympathy.

"They don't feel unkindly towards you, as you think; it

is just the other way, they don't understand you and you don't understand them; they give you credit for good intentions, but they say they don't care about the Pope or the missionaries, which are your two hobbies, and they won't read the tracts; and they won't come to your sermons. To tell you the truth when the last grand garden missionary party was held here, and the carriages were put up at the Green Lion, the serious (?) coachmen and footmen, who were exhorted to band themselves together in support of the poor negro, preferred the cricket tent, and turned out to be the most comical dogs, and spoke slightingly of their black brother. Of course you say I ought to have stopped the ridicule. Parson, I am only human, and ridicule and the 'humorous' are my weak points. I did not encourage them, but I died of laughter on the quiet; and so would you if you had heard a merry-eyed coachman *speculate* on his missus, an old maid in lavender silk that would stand alone, marrying a nigger, and foreshadowing the wedding festivities.

"You know years ago the parson was generally one who was bred and brought up in a country village, often a country gentleman's youngest son, and would ride and shoot and understand agriculture more or less, and without being necessarily a sporting parson, he took his day's shooting or fishing sometimes; had a knowledge and a sort of kinship with men of all classes, saints and sinners, who want a friend in trouble.

"Remember this: the village Benevolent Club dinner, was never perfect unless the parson went and said grace, and more than often it was so at the cricket dinner too, and always so at the cricket supper, if—as was not unusual—the vicar gave a haunch of mutton or a lamb to be played for once a year; *i.e.*, the parson provided *that* much of the feast, and the losing side paid the extras. He just went in

and of course was asked to take the chair, which he never dreamt of doing, and which they never expected him to do, but they liked passing the compliment; and he remarked: I've just come to say a grace for you, and am glad you have had a good match, and hope you'll enjoy yourselves this evening, and *mind* to put the "stopper on" in time;' and *then* there was a good laugh, and with that word in season, the parson said grace and went off, and they gave him a ringing cheer.

"You must know, parson, I am older than you, and I remember the Reform riots which spread into the country villages more or less, and the parsons, who knew and were beloved by their parishioners, had great power and influence for good. Now what I want to draw your attention to is this; that a very little goes a long way, and it is not too late to draw my friends of the Green Lion Club to you Mind, what I tell you is true; it is not so long ago when you were walking across the cricket-green, when a match was going on, that one of the rough fellows made a shameful remark about you, and that a man, who is your favourite aversion, because he once fought another man in a roped ring for £10 and a barmaid,* punched his head on the spot. Yes, Mrs. Vicar, you may laugh, but it is true; and come now, parson, with your snake head, and broad shoulders and sturdy figure, weren't you a good one with the gloves at Balliol? Of course you won't say 'yes'; but depend upon it, Mrs. Vicar, when he was twenty, if he had taken to the Prize Ring, and had appeared with his hair cut short and in fighting trim as a novice, every one would

* This is literally true. I had "the office," but was afraid to go because of "Mrs. Grundy." The winner pocketed the ten pounds and refused the lady. It was a *bona fide* lovers' quarrel, and the lady was very respectable. The ten pounds were only the ransom of the "knights' armour"

have backed him." [Here let me come in as chorus, and say that the vicar and Mrs. Vicar and your humble servant shrieked with laughing when I explained (what I believe), that the vicar's head would have driven any man's knuckles up.] "Now, if you will do what I ask it will make such a difference, and it is simply this: The next time there is a match, walk up to the tent and see how it is going, and say 'Good morning,' and that you hope they are enjoying themselves; you would be as welcome as flowers in May, and I tell you what they would say: 'Now that vicar ain't *half* a bad sort,' and that is just what I should like to hear them say of you—and they *would* say the truth. They are *your* enemies and mine who tell you that we let ourselves down by going to the cricket suppers two or three times in the year, and singing our songs at the Green Lion. You never knew perhaps, but it is no less true, that the gentlemen who joined us in this move took this cricket up on one condition, which was, that if any singer made a blackguard of himself, we would never bring another eleven down; and the ladies, who at our request have come to the ladies' tent, will tell you that they never hear a rough word; in fact, the people are their own police now, and the ladies' tent has had a good effect. Now look here, parson, I tell you when you missed a rare chance. If you remember when I brought down the "Civil Service," who I told you they were mostly old University men, and men of good family, and that they were going to dine at two o'clock with our village eleven, and I asked you to come and say grace, and to introduce you to them, and at the last moment some one persuaded you *not* to. It was a great chance, mind, but it is too late You see, parson, you were brought up amongst too good people, and you have only seen one side of life. I know and have studied roughs. As a young man my delight was to mix in large crowds, and to study the rough as a brother-

man. I have known prize-fighters, navvies, long-shore men by the Thames, men in night cellars, and what you call the scum of the earth; have smoked the friendly pipe with the coster, and discussed burglary as a science with one of the greatest burglars ever known in Newgate, and fished with the late hangman, Mr. Calcraft — a good fisherman, naturalist, and florist, who hated his calling—without his having the remotest idea that I knew who he was. Jack Ketch was fishing in Hertfordshire, and I did not know who he was when our conversation commenced; but when I *did* know, though the situation was peculiar, I did not see why I should shrink from him; in fact, I was rather pleased to think that he had an innocent amusement. I have not gone as a missionary, but have sat down among them as fellow-men. I have seen the most brilliant jewels set in the roughest casket, and I have heard noble sentiments expressed, and seen deeds of charity done worthy of the Good Samaritan, accompanied by language which would make your hair stand on end; and I will tell you a secret —you may *attract* them all to you, but all the preaching at them will not influence them the least, because the preaching is not preceded by the kind word in season in private. *That* is the antidote to the rough language.

"Now I want to get you on about these sports. You say that you hear the fellows use bad language playing quoits; and the very name of skittles is an abomination. Very true; because all sports were condemned by the Puritans, and driven into low beershops. You want all kind of amusements now, skittles — a manly game— promoted and publicly played on the green, the same as cricket, football, and parish organisation of all classes for all sports, and yourself as patron of all. We don't want you to come; your friendly nod on passing by will do it. When I was a boy at school, the

King of Second Masters, whose windows opened on to 'Chamber Court,' sometimes heard 'tall talk,' which was not intended for his ear, uttered in anger. How well I remember, days afterwards, in speaking on some school matters, he would in the kindest way remind the offender of what he had heard, and, prefacing his remarks with 'Mind, I am speaking to you as your friend and not as your master,' he would say a few touching words to him with his hand on the boy's shoulder. And, Vicar, I often feel that hand on my shoulder,' as if he was with me *now* sometimes. You must remember when it was a tight-fit with you, about three or four parish matters, when those like yourself, who were interested in cricket, got all the cricketers' families, and all the people whom they could influence, to back you: and how the vestry had to be adjourned to the school-room, and all the ratepayers who, to adopt the low expression, 'used' the parlour of the Green Lion, and their friends, came and swamped your foes. Let me talk to you like a man and a brother. They did that because you subscribed a guinea to the cricket. They all lament your apathy; but the guinea was a living proof. And see how injudicious some of you are, 'rampaging" about the iniquity of races, just in the race time, when most of the congregation are going to them, or going to have parties to see the people return, and every soul in the parish hopes to turn a penny somehow or another. Why, the dissenting linen-draper's shop is a blaze of green and blue veils. I agree with you entirely, that it would be no great loss to the parish if the Derby was abolished, as the crowd has now become very rough and disorderly, and a lot of our fellows get drunk and keep drunk—not our cricketers, mind you—but so they would if we had a Royal procession through the parish or any other public show or holiday. Nine-tenths of your audience who go,

are going to see a good race or to enjoy a harmless picnic, and it is *not* the racing which is iniquitous: it is the contingent of London roughs who do the mischief.

"What I am driving at all along, parson, is this: all the parish want to put you at the head of all innocent enjoyments, but unfortunately there are a clique whom you allow to pull the strings for you; there always are a puritanical set whom you are afraid of offending, who neither care for art, nor music, nor fun, nor sports, and who are muffs, and want to spoil sports in others; who will not allow their sons to play cricket with 'the vulgar fellows' in the parish; and I am very glad they do not, as they are muffs, and snobs into the bargain very often, and who would faint if they sat down with the blacksmith and carpenter at a cricket supper. Why, when the cricket was wholly in the hands of the public-houses, the club-room windows used to be shut because the parishioners complained of ribald songs which could be heard on the green; but *now* they insist on the windows being opened that they may hear the songs, and often the audience on the green carry an *encore* against 'the room.' They cannot understand that men of that class never take a liberty with gentlemen who mix with them occasionally; and depend upon this—when the struggle about the Church comes, which is not far off, the contingent brought in by those who support the amusements of the parish, whether in the cricket ground, at village concerts, or anything else, will do you more good than all resolutions and speeches at public meetings, and religious agitation.

"You see, English people are not like foreigners, who have a wonderful knack of amusing themseves. Go to a garden in the suburbs of a foreign town on a Sunday afternoon—ah! I forgot; the idea horrifies you about Sunday; but please remember that foreigners keep their

vigil on Saturday, and thus Sunday practically is over at twelve o'clock. On Sunday I said—well, I will add any *fête* day—and then you will see them playing cards for some wine of the value of a *sous* a glass, perhaps, at dominoes or nine-pins, and dancing to a band without any rudeness or vulgarity, or laughing at a punchinello or performing dogs; and you hear shouts of merry laughter; and the old people sit by, the old men smoking their pipes, and their old wives with them. Look at that country girl with her white cap and long ear-rings, dancing with the man in the blue blouse. My wigs! what monkey-capers he cuts! There is this difference with us: a modest girl does not dare stand up to dance in public in England without being insulted by the insufferable 'Arrys, and so they fall to at kiss-in-the-ring, and I grant you that is not a very elevating pastime.

"You say that I want the continental Sunday in England *vice* vour 'Sabbath,' which I own is *very* sad, and which I improve in my own way in my garden which no one can see into, so I don't offend my neighbour. I must tell you straight off, we play lawn tennis after the early dinner, and the servants have perfect rest till 8 p.m. I believe in Sunday rest from labour; and I tell you the actors would not act seven days a week, and people don't want theatres and music-halls open—the idea goes against the English grain. And I would *not* bring out my village eleven because it would make a crowd and annoy my neighbours, but I *do* subscribe to a Sunday Cricket Club of poor fellows who work all the week, and who get to an out-of-the-way place and play cricket; and their rules are threepence fine for any bad language, and a shilling for bringing beer or spirits out, as they are honestly fighting the question of 'harmless amusement *v.* public-house,' and it is *their* battle captained and led by themselves without interference.

"So, parson, do loosen the strings a little; don't pass your little edicts against the gallery for joining in a chorus, if I sing a homely song with a tally-ho refrain at a penny reading. Don't get up and say, 'Silence, if you please.' Let them sing it if they like. The chorus may be noisy, but there is nothing immoral in a good 'coal-box.' Don't be hard on the club at the Green Lion, and don't invite the police to interfere. The landlord of the Green Lion never had a word against his house, as you know; and if the cribbage is beyond the law, take my word for it there is no perdition in 'one for his nob or two for his heels' ('eels,' as Mr. Bumble, the beadle, calls it); and if you saw Mr. Bumble at the critical points of 'Hole and Hole,' at the bottom of the second row, which he calls 'level chalks,' putting down his pipe and wiping his face with excitement, why, parson, you would burst out laughing. You don't see it, parson, but I do, when I go in to see them about cricket. The misfortune is that the Green Lion Club cannot do what they would do if they were foreigners. Mind, I am not one of those who go abroad and abuse everything at home. Well, I say if they were foreigners you would see half the club, in the summer, sitting outside on the green playing that game of cribbage boldly in the public gaze, and you would see the village *curé*, with his umbrella under his arm, looking over Mr. Bumble's cards, as interested as Mr. Bumble at the trying ordeal of 'level chalks' and first player. You would see the skittles openly played. What do you get now instead? The blackguard cocoa-nut men, whose language pollutes the air, and whom you *ought* to put the police upon. I will give you all in that 'Society' have made cards and billiards and theatres (many of them), as now conducted, quicksands for evil, and that local racing has come to a blackguard pitch; but do take it from me that your parishioners who are fond

of sport and music and manly recreations want encouraging by *you*, and if you would get a thorough gentlemen for curate, who is a man of earnest purpose and a muscular Christian, he would turn half the roughs in the place round his finger, and your church would not half hold the people. Your feelings prejudice you. You are not friendly to old Father Peter, the Roman Catholic priest; he is an intimate friend of mine, a dear old man, a rare scholar, a good musician and florist. He has tried hard to convert me, and only the other night I told him if there had been another squeeze of potteen in the bottle, or a drop more hot water, he could have done it. He offered to put the kettle on again, but I preferred a return match and to begin *de novo*. So I was within a glass of punch of being a Roman Catholic, and of training an eleven of priests, as most certainly I should have done. Ah! you say that you will give me as good a glass of mountain-dew as Father Peter, and I *may* have a pipe; done along of you, parson, and—no, Mrs. Parson, I won't keep him up late, and we will keep good hours, as my *friends at the Green Lion do*."

PRE-RAILWAY LIFE IN LONDON.

How shall I begin to describe "Life in London" at a period between the early days of her present Majesty and the railway mania? After the model of Tom and Jerry, or of Sir Mulberry Hawk, and Lord Verisopht, those four dreary snobs who never could have lived, or if they ever did, never could have been in the society of any English gentlemen? Heaven forbid. Let me imagine myself standing, as I often stand, in Westminster Abbey with reverent awe before the statue of Joseph Addison, the busts of Macaulay and Thackeray, my three favourite authors; and let me invoke the shade of the second named to lend me a little of the fire which inspired him when he wrote the wonderful chapter on the state of England in 1685. So here goes for the Macaulayan vein.

I purpose to write the history of London life from the year 1840 down to the year 1846 or thereabouts, a period within the memory of all middle-aged men now living.

London of that period consisted of a large city surrounded by numerous outlying villages and districts, and not wholly shut in by houses as now. From Primrose Hill to Highgate, Hampstead, or Hornsey, lay open tracts of

fields and meadows interspersed with villa residences and rural retreats. Pimlico and Chelsea were comparatively small suburban towns—in fact tea gardens stood on the site of the present Post Office outside Buckingham Palace, and from Battersea Bridge to Wimbledon the foot-passenger found himself amid corn-fields and market-gardens, where now a network of railways and Clapham Junction Station occupy the ground; and the beautiful park of Battersea was a large swampy district, where, in hard winters, the sportsman would not be surprised to find the plover, the snipe, or even an occasional wild duck. The fashionable quarter of London might be included within an area roughly defined by imaginary lines drawn from Belgrave Square to Portman Square, thence eastward to Cavendish Square, thence southward to Palace Yard, the base being a line drawn from that point back to Belgravia. Almost the whole of modern South Kensington was in the hands of market gardeners, and in the Bayswater district beyond Kensington Gardens Gate semi-rural places of entertainment still existed, in which on Sunday afternoons the cheap dandy shop-boy would smoke his Cuba cigar and imbibe his beer, whilst the faithful Anna Maria, his *fiancee*, would consume her tea and shrimps.

For some reason or another the London season proper never set in until after Easter, in consequence of a prejudice against the fashionable world going to balls or operas, or marrying or intermarrying in Lent; and "Society" being more restricted than now, the dread of "what Mrs. Grundy would say" prevented people from doing as they pleased to a great extent.

Possibly at the period of which we write, which was within a year or two of the commencement of the reign, and the early married life of the present Queen, London *en fete* was a spectacle which it is difficult to realise now

Beyond a few trunk lines of railways between the metropolis and Southampton, Birmingham, Brighton, and a few other places, London was isolated from the world at large, except to those who had time and money for long and expensive road journeys, and the "gaiety of the season" was as much a mystery to the majority of Her Majesty's subjects, as now it is a commonplace treat to our country cousins, who, at a little cost, can witness with their own eyes the splendour of the modern Babylon.

A Queen's birthday in the earlier portion of the fifth decade of this century, was a day to be marked with a white stone. There was not much romance about the reigns of George IV and William IV., but a young Queen, who ascended the throne in her eighteenth year drew all hearts to her. First, on the morning of the birthday, came the early review of the Household Brigade, when the Queen would arrive on the ground surrounded by a brilliant staff, at the head of which would be the Iron Duke, accompanied by the old Peninsula officers. There might be seen the Marquis of Anglesea sitting on a charger, which required a bold rider and a steady hand to manage, and Lord Fitzroy Somerset and Viscount Combermere, the Marquis of Londonderry, and Sir Henry Hardinge, and many others, who had perilled life and limb in putting down the tyrant of Europe, and establishing a peace which lasted for forty years. Afterwards would come the drawing-room and the grand show of rank and beauty, and of horses and equipages which were unrivalled in Europe. Then came later on, after the drawing-room, the display in the Park, when the Royal party would appear, and receive the silent and respectful homage of a brilliant crowd of the fashionable world; and at night most probably the Queen would be found as one of the audience at the Opera.

And what an opera it was. There being but one, the

managers were enabled to collect the finest talent in Christendom. To the outside world, who were not subscribers, going to the opera required much care and forethought. On a subscription night, with the exception of the galleries and gallery stalls, and close, stuffy boxes high up, where seeing and hearing were almost impossible, the only refuge was the pit, the seats of which were not only as uncomfortable as they could be, but were, from some unknown cause, generally occupied before those who had paid some four or five shillings beyond the nominal price of eight shillings and sixpence, reached the much-coveted destination; and the ticket-holders thought themselves fortunate if they could obtain standing room with their backs to a wall or a column. No one could pass the doors except in full evening dress, and woe be to the unlucky wight who came in a black neck-cloth, as he would be certain of refusal, in spite of all remonstrance. It was a glorious sight on a birthday night to see the boxes crowded with beautiful women wearing their Court plumes, and jewels which vied with the flash of bright eyes, and it was not difficult to know when the Royal party had arrived, as without any commotion or bustle, faces were all turned in the same direction, and the words "the Queen," passed from lip to lip throughout the audience. How fresh the scene all comes to one's mind now; of old Lablache in the supper scene in "Don Giovanni" singing, and eating the macaroni from a side table the while; of Grisi in the poisoning scene of "Lucretia Borgia," keeping the door with outspread arms, and giving the antidote to Mario. It is a well-authenticated fact that Grisi felt this and many similar scenes so keenly, that frequently she came off in a violent fit of hysterics, and required medical aid to restore her. Again, one hears the grand "Suoni la tomba" in "Puritani," the ghost chorus in "Sonnambula," and the

noble quartette in the "Don;" and reminiscences of the great singers come back to the mind; and the figures of the dancers, Taglioni, Elsler, Cerito, Carlotta Grisi, and Lucille Grahn, not forgetting Perôt and St. Leon, flit across the stage. People should have seen the old opera ballet of the past to understand what ballet dancing was when the *danseuses* had to tell a story in dumb show. When the old basket-maker, who drank on the sly from a bottle concealed under his chair, was found sitting outside his trellis-work cottage at early morning, scolded in good-humoured dumb show by his old wife, who was preparing an *al fresco* breakfast of wooden loaves and indiarubber grapes, and paper apples, and the audience saw impossible peasants, male and female, coming down an impossible mountain, the males with gold reaping-hooks, and attired in striped stockings and the girls with striped stockings too, and carrying bouquets of paper and muslin flowers; everybody knew what would happen. The villagers would all come round the old lady and shake hands, whilst the old gentleman had another pull at the bottle, and would point to a lattice-window with smiling expression, whilst the men clinked their reaping-hooks and drank bumpers of nothing out of gold cups, filled from a bottle the size of an imperial pint; and the girls danced for glee, and in dumb show offered their tribute of flowers, whereon the old woman would enter the cottage, obviously for the purpose of calling her daughter—for of course nobody else could be upstairs. And when the villagers had danced themselves out, and retired to rest on banks and seats, the daughter would come to family prayers in the way that is common to the beauties of Spain or Italy; in fact, the reigning favourite would reach the centre of the stage with two or three bounds, and turn a pirouette, and drop into a curtsey to the crash of the orchestra, and would receive an ovation which an emperor

might covet. Of course the old wounded soldier with a wooden leg, who enters and tells the horrors of war in dumb show, excites the compassion of all, and naturally enough the old lady places him in a chair and provides another banquet, and the villagers retire, and the old gentleman goes to sleep; and what more natural that the old soldier should throw off his venerable locks, kick away his wooden leg, and come out a brilliant young cavalier, and bound about like a cork with the basket-maker's daughter? And of course no one but Perôt or St. Leon could have done this.

The ballet dancers required to be good actresses as well as dancers. Without following the Paul Pry fashion of describing great people at home, the writer of this records that he heard, only a week or two since, from the lips of possibly the most distinguished dancer ever known, now a charming grey-headed lady, who was the *première danseuse* in the celebrated *pas de quatre*, her opinion of the modern ballet dancing. I need hardly say the lady was Madame Taglioni.

In answer to his question whether she had seen the modern dancing, she said: "Oh! it is terrible; to think that women should so dress, and that ladies should go to see them. No! Taglioni," speaking of herself, "never danced so." It was very pleasant to bring all the old puppets out and put them before her, in memory, again, and to witness her delight at having their names once more presented to her mind, amongst others, that of a distinguished exile who was afterwards an emperor, and long since dead. "Ah, poor Prince Louis Napoleon," she exclaimed; "he had not much money then, but he was very nice, and they never refused him a box."

The opera naturally brings us to the omnibus box and Fops Alley, the rendezvous for the dandies and men of

fashion in London, who had the *entrée* behind the scenes and paid their respects to the grand opera stars. The London men of fashion mostly consisted of officers in the Household Brigade and members of military clubs, elder sons who were idle men, gay young members of either House of Parliament, and cadets of noble families who were in the Treasury or Foreign Office, or those who fancied they were reading for the bar. They were always well bred and well dressed, and if there was a taste of puppyism about some of them, it was only external and not very unnatural in young men who had been spoilt from childhood. There was no doubt about their pluck, as has been proved from time immemorial, by the graves of many a hard-fought battle-field, and they never were rude or obtrusive in any way. They were scrupulously particular about good breeding, and would never have dreamt of appearing at the West End with a cigar in their mouths after twelve o'clock in the day, or of nodding to Phryne or Lais in the parks, unless they wished to receive the penalty of ostracism by the dowagers who ruled society. They were just as much at home by the ring side, or in a boxer's sparring room, when they put on the gloves with Tom, or Jack, or Harry, or any other rising novice, for what was usually called a "bellyful," as they were in a drawing-room or the opera. The crowd styled them the Corinthians, or the Swells, and nothing pleased them better than seeing a young lord riding his own horse in a steeple-chase in the Harrow country, and coming in a winner one mass of mud from head to foot.

The race-course was a great place for the swells. Their well-appointed drag, not so common as now, attracted general attention, and it was great fun to hear "Jerry," the king of the card-sellers and turf characters, attired in a cocked-hat and wearing an eye-glass, go up to a four-in-

hand, on the roof of which sat men of the highest rank, and invite himself to some luncheon and champagne—which he was sure to have—and—regardless of rank—to hear him remark to a well-known earl, "Ches, my boy, George (a prince of the blood) looks a little peaky this morning; and 'Maidstone' does not seem up to the mark, and handsome Jamie looks as if he was crossed in love." The dandies of those days were far different from the class who, on the return from the races, drink champagne out of tankards by the roadside in some country village to the admiration of suburban snobs.

Some of them lost fortunes at hazard or on the turf, and occasionally were locked up in a sponging-house for debt, but many set manfully to work again, and in the colonies or elsewhere made for themselves a name and position.

The ruffianism of London was supported by a class whose natural history was written by Albert Smith under the name of "The Gent," and an odious class they were. For them the Haymarket taverns and night saloons and supper rooms were kept open all night; and they were the last supporters of Greenwich Fair, and the orgies of Vauxhall masquerades, where, under a bright morning sun, Richard Cœur de Lion and a Troubadour might have been seen engaged in a drunken fight, aided and abetted by their companions who, as Mary Queen of Scots and a nun respectively, backed their male companions with a volley of oaths which exceeded the Billingsgate of the men.

The fact was that "complimentary" tickets for masquerades were issued wholesale amongst the lowest of the low; as was proved by a young "lady" behind the bar of a very flash drinking-shop in the Haymarket remarking to a friend—"We are all going to the feet" *(fête)* "at Vauxhall, dear, as shepherdesses; and Mrs. B. (the landlady, a stout, red-faced woman, with fingers like Cambridge sausages,

covered with large rings) "is going as Di*h*anner; and she looks very 'andsome in a blue and silver dress, with a bow and arrers in her 'and, and a 'alf moon in her 'air." Most men "did the rounds of London" once or twice, but that was quite enough for anyone with a mind.

Weippart provided a band and a good ball-room for gentlemen who wanted a little quiet dancing—at a tariff far beyond the reach of "the Gent"—at which no one was admitted except in full dress; and, though the dancers were mostly members of the *corps de ballet* of the Opera, of a higher grade than the ordinary ballet girl of to-day, no one would know, from their dress, manners, and appearance, that (but for the fact of the paucity of *chaperones*) it was not a private ball. Perhaps it was rather a bore to be constantly asked by your partner to take a ticket for her own or her sister's ball for the next week; but the dancers, who were many of them dancing mistresses, and probably received some small payment for attending the balls, found the amusement, and wanted the money, and it was hard to say "No."

One very funny scene occurred at one of these balls many years ago. A young member of the legislature had made his maiden speech in Parliament that night, and they stood him on a table in the ball-room, and made him give it all over again.

Whether the story is accurately true in all its details or not matters little, as tales of this kind, which were freely circulated and believed at the time, show the spirit of the age, as Macaulay says. On a certain occasion one of those underbred fellows who poison every rill and stream of innocent pleasure, and make it impossible to have dancing in public as they do abroad, obtained an *entrée* to one of Wieppart's ballet balls, and being much enamoured of a fair *danseuse*, invited her to a Richmond dinner on the following Sunday. The fair *danseuse* said she would not come alone,

but must bring a friend. The offer was gladly accepted, and arrangements were made that the beau should bring a friend also. A boon companion readily agreed to share the dinner and the expense, and a private room was engaged at the Star and Garter, and a banquet, regardless of cost, was ordered, with bouquets for the ladies. The two amorous swains arrived and heard that the ladies were before them. With rapture the founder of the feast beheld his fair partner, wearing a charming bonnet which he had sent her, waiting for him in the garden, and accompanied her into the hotel for the purpose of introducing his brother Lothario to the other lady. On entering the room the young lady introduced a stout, middle-aged woman with a squint (who in private life kept a greengrocer's shop), temporarily occupied pending the dinner hour with a glass of rum and water, strongly flavoured with sugar and lemon, as "her mamma." And before the hour of departure arrived that middle-aged lady, who displayed a wonderful power of digestion and thirst, somewhat sharply wanted to know the young man's intentions towards her "darter," whom she took home under her own wing.

As regards the sports of the period they were quieter than those of the present day. The Oxford and Cambridge boat race which was rowed before the days of outriggers from Westminster to Putney attracted a few thousand spectators who were interested in rowing or belonged to either university, and there was plenty of room for all to see or for equestrians to ride along the banks. The Public School matches at Lord's—which were stopped through the pig-headed obstinacy of a few dons—attracted a goodly assemblage of relatives and friends of the boys, without any extravagant crowds. Lord's was then, as now, the head centre of cricket, and crowds such as are seen now never assembled, except when Kent *v.* England, or Gentleman *v.*

Players was the match, at either of which the best talent, amateur and professional, were sure to be present.

In the autumn, gentlemen shot over dogs, and never dreamt of selling their game, and they were the masters, and the keepers were their servants. In the newspaper world only a few morning papers and evening papers were published in London. "Bell's Life" was almost the only sporting paper. One or two scurrilous Sunday papers came out, especially "The Satirist," edited by a very talented man named Barnard Gregory, who was hooted off the stage, on his attempt to play Hamlet, through the instigation of "Stunning Joe Banks," of the Rookery, who kept a very "rowdy" public-house in St. Giles's, a favourite resort for a well-known Irish marquis and his companions when they were out for a night's "devilry." It was alleged that Mr. Banks was hired by a foreign Duke to pack the gallery and drive Mr. Gregory off the stage, and an action for conspiracy was brought against the Duke and another, in which Mr. Banks was examined, and swore that he packed the gallery at his own expense in the *interest of morality!* The judge who tried the case, and who lived in the parish of St. George's, Bloomsbury, in summing up, told the jury that if they believed the witness he should congratulate himself in having such a *moral* neighbour as Mr. Banks! In 1846 came the railway mania, and then came chaos. All the country towns were brought to London, and all England gambled and went mad, and hundreds were ruined. Millionaires arose, and not only took possession of the world of fashion in London, but also of many of the country seats, and classes got so mixed that it was difficult to unravel the skein. A new description of people came into the Legislature and the Government. Railways sprang up everywhere, since which period telegraphs and telephones have been introduced, and we boast almost of omnipresence

and omnipotence. The Atlantic is only a ferry now, and people think no more of going to India, or South America, or Australia, or New Zealand for a trip than they used to think of going to Scotland or Ireland forty years ago. It is hard to say when H's were first commonly dropped in conversation in Belgravia, and when peas were first carried with the knife to the mouth; but these eccentricities are of minor importance compared with the intemperance in language and in writing which have cropped up within the last few years amongst people who have had the advantage of good education and the society of ladies and gentlemen; but it is certain that in the so-called darker age of which the paper treats, the flatly denying a gentleman's word, and throwing imputation on his honour would have occasioned the burning of powder at Wimbledon Common or Chalk Farm.

It must not be forgotten that in 1841 "Punch" was inaugurated, and within a few years of its commencement possibly the finest staff of caricaturists with pen and pencil ever known were brought together, and it is astonishing that after nearly forty years the artists can find so much novel wealth for amusement, and it is a matter of wonder that even now sometimes the gossip runs through the clubs that some careful reader has found a joke in the letterpress.

Few people would like to go back to the old days entirely, and, but for the inexhaustible power of jaw displayed inside and outside of the House of Commons, the world goes on pretty comfortably, though it is hard for quiet citizens to rest at a time when, from mere greed of power, so-called "public men," are forgetting the boundaries of truth and honour, and in bidding for the support of the lower orders are utterly reckless of drifting into Communism, and the link between the Swells of Society and the lower orders if not actually broken is strained beyond recovery.

THE OLD DOVER ROAD.

THE sudden change from an isolated rural village in the Wiltshire downs, which was nine miles from any town, and which could not even support a carrier, to a new home situate halfway between London and Dover, naturally made no slight impression on the mind of a little boy, as I was at the time of my removal, just half a century ago, and, with your leave, good reader, I will set down a few memoranda. In busy times at least a hundred public conveyances, including travelling carriages with post horses, would pass our gate in a day; and Sittingbourne and Rochester, a few miles on either side of my home, being great posting places, with ample hotel accommodation, I saw a great deal of the pre-railway travelling in the olden time. It was a great treat to me to watch the rows of postboys sitting in front of the principal inns, attired in long white smock-frocks, the yellow-white hat peculiar to their class, ready booted and spurred, lazily smoking their pipes until summoned. They sprang into action quickly enough at the cry of "first and second turn out!" and ran up the inn-yard, and reappeared in their smart red jackets, striped waistcoats, and white neckcloths; and sometimes two, or even three, carriages would arrive together, requiring twelve horses and six postboys, and I have seen the row of smock-

frocks reduced to a very small company in a short time, when there was an exodus from London to the continent, or *vice versâ*. Then the argus-eyed ostler, whose duty seemed to be to drink with every traveller, and whose notice nothing escaped, would catch sight of a little feather-weight express-boy, on a long-legged, lean old thorougbred, galloping up, and the cry would be heard, "Express boy on!" and another little feather-weight boy, attired in red jacket, blue waistcoat bound with gold braid, gold band round his hat, a cockade,and diminutive breeches and boots, would bring out anotherlong-legged,lean old thoroughbred,and would take the despatch-bag, with the simple instructions,"Government," "Rothschilds," or "Press," as the case might be, and start off at a hand gallop, and be as much bespattered with mud in a few minutes as the little jockey who had just delivered his budget of news, having ridden the eleven-mile stage in forty-five minutes, and who had just dismounted and undone the saddle-girths, turning his panting steed, which was in a regular lather, with his head to the wind.

But landlords and landladies most rejoiced when the courier, swinging himself off the rumble, would run up the steps of the hotel with much importance, with an order for "two sitting-rooms and eight bedrooms for the Duke of Blank's, or Lord and Lady Dash's party." And wasn't the order repeated loud enough? and didn't all the bells ring? and didn't we all stare?—that's all. And didn't the landlord and landlady come and hand them out, and give them their titles? "Yes, your Grace," and "No, your Grace." There were no pot-hats and ulsters then; and Her Grace or my Lady Countess wore an enormous big bonnet, with her long curls full of dust, and her noble husband had on an uncomfortable hat, very broad at the top, with shirt-collar up to his eyes, and the collar of his greatcoat—which was made with two buttons in the small of his back—up to his

ears, and impossible outside pockets on his hips, which were so tight that nothing could be got in or out of them.

Verily our dress has improved now—in proof whereof we have set the fashion to all Europe—and so has our social comfort as regards airy bedrooms, *vice* swell over-furnished dungeons, lighted at night by a rushlight in a horrible perforated bucket-like apparatus, which made ghost-eyes all over the room; baths, and rough towels, and brown windsor, *vice* the small basin and jug, and hard white soap which smelt like tallow and never lathered, and soft towels like napkins; iron spring beds and hair mattresses, *vice* enormous feather-beds and four-posters, shut in with curtains and every kind of device which could produce gout, apoplexy and indigestion. And then in winter they warmed the bed with coals, and left a fine flavour of Vesuvius for a nightmare.

And you may be sure that the landlady herself showed her noble guests into their rooms; and if the weather was cold, there was a fire ready burning in the bedrooms. And you may be sure the landlord took in the first dish at dinner, and called his Grace's attention to the fact that he had ventured to add to the dinner some Rochester smelts, fresh caught that morning, or—according to season—that the Kentish filberts were from a celebrated orchard; or the Kentish cherries had only just been picked for his Grace's dessert, and that the oysters came from the Milton beds close by. Ah me! native oysters were carried about the villages then three for a penny. Why didn't I eat more? Dr. Johnson, when he was dying, said he had never had as much wall-fruit as he could eat; I expect the present generation will say, when their time comes, they never had enough oysters.

Our stage-coaches, with "the team all harnessed to start, glittering in brass and in leather," and piled with luggage,

made a brave show, but they only promoted a brandy-and-water and glass of beer trade by the way, as coaches seldom stayed anywhere on our road, as the opposition was very great, and the competition in rapid change of horses very keen. I can see the foreigners now, all over dust in summer, and miserable if it rained. They didn't enjoy their travelling much, as I suppose the bitterness against England had not worn out, and coachmen said it was a miracle to get a shilling out of them, and some of them, when understanding that a tip was expected of them, would bring out a few sous, with "Ah, je comprends; c'est pour boire, monsieur!"

And what pleasant music the horn, and the tramp of the horses, and the rattling of the harness made, on a clear frosty night, when we were all snug under the clothes; and how it cheered watchers by sick-beds to hear for a moment the stir of life outside.

There were little amenities in those days which we miss now. If a commercial traveller gave one a lift, or a visitor was coming or going from the house, or the coachman had to leave a basket of fish from London, a glass of sherry or cherry brandy, or a bouquet of flowers, or a basket of strawberries cost nothing, and were thought a great deal of. Never shall I forget the astonishment of one of the coachmen who ran in to have a glance at the garden, and a hasty view from the drawing-room windows and a glass of wine. "Good heavens!" he exclaimed, "to think that I have driven past this door for twenty years, and never knew of this!" As it is a sample of dozens of views equally beautiful between London and Dover, I will try and sketch it. Take for the immediate foreground a beautiful lawn like an emerald cloth, dot it here and there with borders full of American shrubs, plant some fine mountain ash, silver birch and acacia trees, and surround it with thick shrubbery on either side, and a high hedge at the end of the garden

which makes a line of sight, beyond which are orchards, and a sea of golden corn between the garden and the Medway, which is a mile or so off. In the corn fields throw in figures of harvesters and waggons. On the extreme left don't forget a tract of green marsh land terminating with a picturesque hill; and on the right centre a broken line of quays and wharves, and lazy barges with red and brown sails going in and out; intersperse the surface of the Medway with any number of fishing boats with white sails, and beyond the river in the distance paint the hundred of Hoo and a long stretch of mainland, and beyond the mainland against the horizon put in the Thames covered with shipping, and the Essex coast and Southend, and through a vista between some splendid elms at the end of the garden on the extreme right, and also in the horizon, is the Nore, ten miles off, with the men-of-war standing out against the clear atmosphere, and the shipping, and the dockyard sheds with their skylights all ablaze in the evening sun.

Charles Dickens's story, incidentally mentioned in "Pickwick," about the two brothers, one of whom drove the up, and the other the down-coach on the Dover road for many years, and who had no communication with each other except the coachman's salute in passing, is quite true. I remember the two brothers well, and no doubt Dickens's story, that when one died the other pined, is correct. And what nice fellows the coachmen were, many of them quite gentlemen in their manners, though we had no "swell" coachmen on that road.

The iron horse was ruin to many good men, some of whom came to absolute beggary, and others had to drive a 'bus and *work* their sixteen miles on the stones in London. The guards were all right enough, as they were sent with the mail bags by railway. I met one of them at a railway station some time after the Dover day mail was stopped, and

was horrified with his republicanism, as he pleaded guilty to preferring a covered carriage sheltered from weather, and his home every night, to the bitter drive in the dead of winter, and his return home only three nights a week.

It must have been terrible work for coachmen and guards in very heavy snow The old pictures of digging out the coach and sending for farm horses to pull it out are not at all exaggerated; and guards who wished for promotion for extra zeal performed feats which were incredible almost, such as taking the bags and mounting one of the horses, making their way at night across country through the snow.

Another kind of traffic, long since superseded by Act of Parliament, may be found recorded in some of Seymour's old caricatures of dog-carts. Fruit and fish, crockery and light wares, were hawked in small carts drawn by dogs, as they now are in Belgium. Bull-dogs and large spaniels, if I remember right, prevailed, and often you would see a great hulking lubber riding in the cart, and the poor dogs with their tongues out regularly beaten. Belgian dogs are of a peculiar breed, and seem as well calculated for the work as the Esquimaux dogs, the great difference between the English and Belgians being that dog-cart men treated their dogs cruelly sometimes, but in Belgium my experience was quite the reverse. The travelling circulated a great deal of money naturally. The Rose at Sittingbourne had the credit of making up sixty beds, and having twenty pairs of horses on call in the stables; and the George, another good inn opposite of smaller dimensions, did a good trade too, as did the Bull, and Wright's at Rochester. Head chambermaids and head waiters of long service became hotel keepers very often, and numbers of people who made a good mark in the world sprang from the local towns which were the centres of travelling. If the truth was really told, there was a great deal of smuggling, too, behind the scenes, both

by land and water, and I know one excellent gentleman, now, whose bill I should like to hold for £100,000 for discount in Lombard Street, who commenced life by hawking fruit and fish, and who attributes his success in the world to having earned something every day, and only spending sixpence out of every shilling. "How did you manage," asked an old friend, "when you were in Maidstone gaol for smuggling? you could not earn money then." "Yes, I did," he answered, "for the barber was ill, and I contracted to shave the prisoners at a halfpenny a head." Smuggling went on to a great extent, as, independently of the seaboard, there were many villages on the Medway in which illicit trade was carried on. The undertakers, whether innocently or not, once assisted in a large smuggling transaction. An announcement appeared in the papers that an English lady, the wife of some celebrated foreigner, had died abroad, and the body was to be sent home for burial. The time of its arrival was communicated by the undertaker to the clergyman in each village through which the body was to pass, and a guinea was sent for having the bell tolled, which was duly done. The hearse and six, and two mourning coaches and four, with black velvet trappings and feathers, made a grand show, and the foreigners who accompanied the body as mourners received much attention where they stopped for refreshment. The Custom House officers knew that a large cargo of lace had been landed, and searched all suspected coaches and carriages, and racked their brains to trace the smuggled goods in vain, but they never suspected "their dear departed sister," in the shape of a cargo of lace, packed in a very large coffin, was taken to London and buried, and dug up again. Let us hope that the beautiful service for the dead was not read over it; but smugglers were not over particular.

On another occasion a quantity of lace was known to

have been landed, and the scent was lost. A special order had been received at Dover for post-horses to be in waiting for a very expeditious journey, and a rumour was carefully circulated that it was for the smugglers, as the money for the horses was paid in advance. A carriage was to go to a place a little on the other side of Dover and pick up a gentleman, who got in without any luggage but a portmanteau, and the postboys, according to private orders, dashed through Dover to Canterbury as hard as they could go. The officers, who suspected that the passenger was going to pick the cargo up at some of the notorious places for depositing smuggled goods, ordered a carriage in pursuit. They arrived at Canterbury a few minutes after the suspected vehicle, hurried on with four horses, at any price, to catch the runaway, followed just at the heels of the other carriage through Faversham, Sittingbourne, Rochester, and Gravesend, where they found the old return heavy night coach—an extra, which carried the newspapers and the bulky part of the foreign mails once a week to Dover, and took its own time going back, pretty much at its own pace. "Did you see a chaise and four, at full gallop, pass you?" they asked of the old coachman, a kind of half superannuated whip. "Yes," was the reply, "and I think one horse of their last change was lame, so if anything is wrong you may catch them yet." Away went the custom-house men, and caught the carriage at Dartford, where it was waiting for fresh horses, whilst the passenger had his supper. They walked straight into the traveller's room, and found a gentlemanly stranger, who asked their business. "We shall search your carriage in the King's name," was the reply. "Search, and be ——," was the answer. There was nothing in the carriage but a portmanteau, and the only thing for the officers to do was to apologise, and the matter was at an end. And where was the lace? In

the *old heavy mail*, the driver of which who was generally a superannuated crack whip, had been "squared," and he doddled along at his leisure without suspicion, dropping his valuable contraband goods in one of the suburbs of London on the way. The guard of the old Dover day mail told me this.

The most uncomfortable vehicle was the postchaise, generally painted a bright yellow—made to run light and carry two. The bumping of those carriages, the draughty doors and rattling windows, and damp straw at the bottom, haunt me now. The best horses were always kept for private carriages, and two screws and a half-drunken postboy often fell to the lot of the postchaise traveller.

But those coachmen, and guards, and postboys, and innkeepers, and smugglers, and dog-cart men, and express boys have become things of the past, and the bulk of them probably have gone to the happy hunting grounds long ago, with some of the animals, too, *if* poor Whyte-Melville's wishes come true, when he sings—

> "There are men both good and wise who hold that in a future state,
> Dumb animals we have cherished here below,
> Shall give us joyous greeting as we pass the golden gate;
> Is it folly that I hope it may be so?"

Well! I shouldn't mind meeting my old donkey "Pug" some day, and an old cat called "Mother Bunch," and all my favourite dogs, though I fear that "Jerry," whose life was one warfare, would have a turn-up with Cerberus offhand, and disturb the harmony of the meeting.

And what strange wayfarers we had! One day a carriage broke down and an old gentleman was stranded at the village inn opposite, who refused to come in, and who turned out to be Rowland Hill, the great preacher. Surely he could not have been such a bigot as to be afraid to enter the vicarage! Then we entertained an angel unawares in

the shape of a very polished foreign lady, the wheels of whose carriage caught fire, who was very diffident about coming into "the priest's house," as she called it in French, and was no less a person than Taglioni, and who made herself most charming, and was enraptured with the garden and the flowers and the scenery. Another day we had a Pole, very shabby and travel-worn, evidently a gentleman, and the old governor had him in to luncheon (which he ate like a famished man), and lent him—for the man would not take the money as a gift—five shillings. How he was chaffed about lending the foreigner the "five bob," and especially about his credulity in thinking that he would ever see it again; and didn't he turn the tables on the scoffers when three months afterwards he received a letter from Constantinople, all cut and slashed and perfumed as a disinfectant from plague, with the money returned, and a letter, which was worth its weight in thousand pound notes, saying that the loan enabled him to reach London and saved him from starving, and that he had atained a good berth.

Then we had a black man in the runaway slave business, if I remember rightly, who was on the tramp and said he was very ill. My mother, who, *à la* parson's wife, physicked the whole parish, fully believed him, and said, "I am sure he is bilious by the look of his eyes;" and she made him a strong dose of rhubarb and jalap, which Mr. Snowball took on trust, thinking it was something good, and put it down at a gulp. If any "corner" man in an Ethiopian band could make the face that nigger did, and fly to the pump as that man did, it would make his fortune. A great hunch of bread and bacon to cheer him up, when he got better, consoled him; but we never had another nigger to beg.

Then we had a coach upset, and a member of a poor French family was seriously injured. The Frenchman's purse was very nearly empty, and the luggage was almost

of a phantom description ; but the people at the inn trusted to Providence and took them all in, and the villagers made the family's misfortune their own during their sojourn. The gratitude of the head of the family was only equalled by his surprise at English sympathy, and his farewell was very characteristic of his nation, "I thought English were cruel people, but they are angels." I suppose the poor fellow only knew us formerly as natural enemies to France, and expected to find us all with fixed bayonets and drawn swords. If the good Samaritan had lived in our time he would have found his hands pretty full on the old Dover Road, and it is a pleasure to think that he had many successors.

As a variety we had the rick-burning riots and the Reform riots, and the yeomanry were constantly trotting about with jingling spurs and clattering sabres. And we became notorious, owing to the Bosenden Wood riots in 1837 A madman, by the name of Thoms, who called himself Sir William Courtney, Knight of Malta, and who said he was the Messiah, and invulnerable, raised the county about Canterbury and Faversham, and shot a constable who went to apprehend him for riot ; in retaliation wherefore a company of the 44th Regiment was sent after him, and Thoms and eight of his merry men were shot dead, and several wounded, one fine May morning ; unfortunately not before the ringleader murdered Lieutenant Bennett, the officer in command, who, in hopes of stopping bloodshed, asked him to surrender. Everybody who saw Thoms said he was a magnificent man, with a fine beard and moustache, and in face much resembling the sacred portraits. This sudden rising showed what could be done by road in those days, as the magistrate who sent for the troops to Canterbury, sixteen miles off (*i.e.*, thirty-two miles there and back), received an answer in two hours and a half that a company of soldiers were starting in carriages for Faversham. Kent

was a riotous county if the people once rose, and prompt measures were requisite. I had these facts from an old cousin of my own, the magistrate who sent for, and went with, the soldiers, and read the Riot Act.

Then we had all the migratory world *en route* to and from London; buy-a-broom girls, and Italian boys, and dancing dogs, and dancing bears, and monkeys, and Punch and Judy, and thimble-rig men (who always got "a month" as rogues and vagabonds if caught), and strapping big Irishmen with linen from Belfast, and gypsies and harvesters, whose bivouacs illuminated our lanes of a night, and beasts *in transitu* to the Paris Zoological Gardens: on one occasion an enormous elephant with a young one marching through, and on another occasion some camels and zebras. And we constantly had regiments on the march, and detachments billeted *en route*, and they made a brave show in church on Sundays, though I am afraid the officers, *credo* an old maiden aunt of mine deceased, stared at the girls all through the service. At racing times we saw the racehorses travelling by road, and heard a great deal of strong talk. Then one would meet absurd little men, wrapped up in flannels and greatcoats in the dog-days, and carrying their saddles and bridles, and walking four miles an hour, "wasting" by the way. Nothing surprised us in that busy thoroughfare—which is now almost a desert.

I often wonder that people with plenty of money don't take a carriage and drive down the Kentish roads.

In spring, when the orchards are in bloom, Kent is exceedingly beautiful, and so it is in the hop-picking season. and there being only one level mile—and that on the top of Chatham Hill—between Shooter's Hill and the outskirts of Dover, the scenery is remarkably striking from the high ground, and the drive very pleasant. The views all over the county from Boughton Hill, and of Canterbury and the

valley of the Stour from Harbledown, and of Dover Castle and the French coast from Lyddon Hill, and the Maidstone valley from Boxley or Blue Bell Hill, are as beautiful as anything of the kind in England, mostly within fifty, and all within seventy miles of London. Few people ever go and see Rochester Castle, and the west gate of the cathedral, and the dockyard, and fortifications, and Cobham Hall (Lord Darnley's seat), and the Medway, though they are all worth a visit, with plenty of reminiscences of Gad's Hill and Falstaff and other old memories historical and Pickwickian, and young men with good thighs and sinews who have no carriages, would find a walk from London to Dover a very pleasant change.

So there is a long yarn about nothing but happy memories, which so much infatuated me that I made a pilgrimage last week to scenes of my boyhood which I left behind me nearly forty years ago. The lads of the village little thought that the stranger who had some refreshment was peopling the old village inn—the Lion Hotel, once the "Green Lion"—which used to be painted standing on one claw and sparring with the whole world—with ghosts of those who have long since joined the majority, and was chuckling with inward delight to see that the same old clock, of unknown age, was ticking away in its own corner. I was in dreamland, and, in fancy, saw the coach draw up to take me back, as a little boy, to the hardships of a public school, and I was fighting hard to "die game" on leaving home. If I saw with a sigh that houses and brick-fields and cement works had supplanted orchards and cornfields here and there, and that the old cricket field was built over, it was a comfort to think that heaven is not built with hands, and that no builder or contractor can desecrate it with staring cottages with green doors and brass knockers, and a violent red-brick Ebenezer.

BANKRUPTCY IN ARCADIA.

It is the nature of man always to talk of the "good old times," and so it will be, I suppose, to the end of the world. Goldsmith, in his "Deserted Village," sings the same tune, and Nyren, in his immortal "Cricketer's Guide," deplores the glorious times of the old Hambledon Club, contrasts the superiority of the ales and the punch then with those of the day on which he writes, and the superior excitement in the matches of the past compared with those of his own time. I am by no means sure that the name of *laudator temporis acti* is not more a term of honour than of reproach, as being convicted of the failing of looking back on the happy days long since past simply proves that those to whom it is applied enjoyed their boyhood and their youth. I hope I am thankful for those halcyon days which bring back pleasant memories of great events, such as a pair of shoe-stirrups for my donkey-pad for learning the multiplication table; my first watch, my first pony, my first gun, my first match, and, in looking back on the dear old governor's judgment, I now see how just and wise he was in not letting me go up to Lord's when I was first in the eleven, keeping me back for another year, as an inducement

to be a better boy. And I must tell a story of the old governor, to show how I inherited my old Tory notions. The evidence lies before me now in the shape of a child's book called "Scenes in England," in which book is an account of the Cornish wreckers, who, as the writer says, were brought to a better state of mind and humanity through the exertions of an excellent body of men called "The Wesleyan Methodists." But the stout old English parson *would* have history written his own way, and struck out "Wesleyan Methodists" with a broad pen and inserted in good round text "The Clergy of the Established Church of England."

As a matter of course, railways, telegraphs, and the enormous increase of the Press, have been the cause of our living much more in public in the present day than formerly. The spread of education and public agitation have disturbed the rustic simplicity of our village homes. Mr. Arch, the agricultural labourers' champion, has invaded Arcadia, and made our Melibœi and Tityri strike against Pan and Ceres and Flora and Pomona, and the squire and the farmers are in no little trepidation about labour in the event of an abundant harvest. Our Tityrus is smoking his pipe now in a beershop brewing treason, and Melibœus is "picketing knobsticks" who are ready to do a fair day's work for a fair day's wage. In fact, the tie between master and man is loosened to everyone's loss.

The day is gone by for restrictions as to servants' dress, and you may see now in a country village church a parody of the latest London fashions in the dress of the rural population; the village louts wear flash, ill-cut, shoddy "swell" clothes, and the time will arrive ere long when a smock-frock will be kept in the British Museum as a record of the costume of the English peasant in the so-called comparatively "dark ages."

The change which has so much affected the lower order of rustics has grown out of the change which has been going on in those above them. Anyone who reads the late Miss Mitford's "Tales of our Village," will see how a village used to be self-supporting for its interests and amusements, and how the humbler classes who followed sport, or every-day duties, were distinct characters who stood out individually.

We read in her charming book of the rat-catcher, the bird-catcher, the mole-catcher, records of the country fair, haymaking, harvest homes, and the many minor incidents and events which made up the little history of a country village. And above all, don't let us forget her account of the "village cricket match." I verily believe that had Miss Mitford lived for ever, and had been ubiquitous, and had reported cricket, that "Bell's Life" would have put up his shutters during the summer, and the "Sportsman" would have been going about trying to borrow half-a-crown of the "Sporting Life."

Cricketers of England! I beseech you, take down Miss Mitford's tales and read the account of the Sunday evening's practice before the match. Mark you the *Sunday* evening's practice, when villagers all went to church like "Christian men," also played cricket in the evening under the *same* name. And I will back Miss Mitford's evidence as regards real Christianity against the field.

But it is no good crying over spilt milk, and our losses are much counterbalanced by our gains. It is twenty times better to have Mr. Arch stirring up strife, and Tityrus in the beer-shop, and Meliboeus "picketing," than to have the ricks all ablaze—as I well remember—threshing-machine riots, and the military firing into the mob, hang-fair after the assizes, putrid fever from overcrowded cottages, and many other evils which were things of course forty or fifty

years ago. The professional agitators are the lowest scoundrels outside a certain place which is not usually mentioned in polite society; but you cannot, except when life is threatened, put a Martini-Henry bullet through a poor devil of an agricultural labourer who has been misled by some cold-blooded outside body in London, who don't know a cucumber from a vegetable-marrow, and whose sole object is to fatten on strife.

But there are things we *do* miss. The village cricket match is one of these. The downfall of this old institution is easily accounted for—because there are very few cricket fields, as land is too valuable and people are too busy, and the consumption of country produce in London since the railway days is so great, that everything which can be made to grow by scientific farming and otherwise must grow; and the farmer has become a man of business who puts his capital into the soil, and probably attends three markets a week, whereas in days gone by he would only attend one. The leisure is gone; and as regards the young gentleman class, their ideas are of a higher order now, and they belong to some club within hail, and aspire to be matched against the Zingari, or the Civil Service, or Incogniti, or the Garrison, and prefer a "dress cricket match," with crowds of ladies, champagne, and a dance in the evening to the sound of a military band, to the homely village match and the half-crown dinner at the Cricketers.

Then as regards our country races, where are they? Numbered with the past pretty much. Take the Wye races, for instance, on the punch-bowl course, between Canterbury and Ashford. I remember them when they were very insignificant races, attended by the farmers, the rural population, and the officers from Canterbury. The stakes were very small, and it was sometimes difficult to make a field; I don't suppose any bets above a sovereign were often

made. Now the Wye races are placarded all about London, and special trains are run, and it is a real meeting. Should anyone be fortunate enough to go to Wye races on a fine day, he will see racing in a natural amphitheatre and some of the most beautiful scenery in England, though our Wye primitive races are gone; and to betting men it is a business meeting, far more attractive than the Canterbury races ever were to the London world; although it is only about a century ago since the Canterbury races on Harbledown were preceded by a public breakfast, and were commemorated also by a public dinner, with a wind-up of a "grand main of cocks" in the evening, under the patronage of the mayor and corporation of the city.

Then there were our old local hunt steeplechases, open to the members of the hunt only, for horses which were ridden during the year over a *bonâ fide* hunting country which had been the scene of a run during the season, artificial fences being barred. Those are dead and gone too. The last of these which I saw was in Kent, in 1845 or thereabouts, when the prizes were ten pounds for the first horse, a new bridle and saddle for the second, and a silver-mounted whip for the third. I know nothing about steeplechasing, but I remember it was rare fun. It was purely a local meet of the neighbouring farmers, and one big suttling booth sufficed for all comers.

It was a place for cordial meeting. Everybody knew everbody, and a great many who entered merely did so for the fun and the gallop, without any idea of winning; and it was a genuine hearty day's amusement without gambling, and possibly 500 people only were present. A real local sport of this kind being discontinued is a great loss, for it made young fellows ambitious to acquire the noble art of horsemanship, which was within their power. The sport was good enough to incite a youngster to try and ride across

country, and was not so appalling as to dissuade him from the attempt to do as well as Mr. A., or Mr. B., or friend C., all of whom he knew and had seen dozens of times with the hounds, or going to or returning from covert. It was all fair riding without roping or besting.

Even the flower shows are almost impossible to keep up, and there is "roping" in these pure arcadian amusements. Unless the prizes are large enough gardeners won't exhibit, and even then there is a great deal of "squaring" amongst them, and private agreement about dividing the schedule, so that a few only shall compete for each class, and thereby secure prizes for all. And in the cottagers' department it is necessary to have the gardens inspected many weeks before the show, to insure competitors not buying fruit or flowers and exhibiting them as of their own growth. Even the village children who show wild flowers and grasses have to be severely cross-examined sometimes as to whether the collection is really their own. The *auri sacra fames* is eating us up, and Astræa herself could not in these days satisfy the disappointed.

The village bell-ringing, too, is now purely a matter of money, and the inter-village contests for a supper do not exist. Ringers want now a guaranteed sum per annum, and expect a subscription for a summer excursion, and a heavy honorarium in the winter; and in many places they think a crown somewhat shabby, and half a sovereign by no means too much.

The country fair is becoming another thing of the past. The manufacturers of colossal gingerbread cocks with gilded sides must have a poor trade of it now; the fat lady, the John Bull dwarf in top-boots, the little old woman of seventy years of age (who was shown to the audience, and who was probably "doubled" in her part by the showman's child), who was put in a small barrel and rang a hand-bell through

the bunghole, are no more; the man who drew a dozen yards of tape out of his mouth, and "Middleton's Fantoccini," and the Hottentot Venus, who carried a cavalry soldier on her *panier*, and pitched him over her head, would find no audience now, as the fair would be stormed by the scum of the earth from some neighbouring town, and a dozen police would be required *vice* the parish beadle, who was man enough to keep order, and who was wont to take the exceptional wrong-doers—who had their ten days for rioting and drunkenness—handcuffed in a cart to the county gaol next morning; the keeper and prisoners being on the best terms, and refreshing themselves on the way, and probably talking over the fair.

I miss the rat-hunt in the barn too. The old barns of unknown age are replaced by substantial buildings, bricked and slated, and comparatively rat-proof. The old flail is a thing of the past, and so are the piles of golden grain in the corner of the barn; and there is now no necessity for farmer Broadbean's rat-hunt, where every boy and every dog in the parish were welcome, and there was as much dog fighting as rat-hunting. The corn is carried, threshed by machinery, and packed off before the rats can get at it. In fact, I complain of the abolition of "the rat which ate the malt," &c., who acquired, if possible, additional immortality through the agency of Mr. Caldecott's inimitable drawings in his little Christmas book, "The House that Jack built." Some of the sheep-shearing and harvest suppers, and village revels under no control, are not much loss, as bucolical youths, overloaded with beef and beer and pudding, were not nice specimens of humanity, and oftentimes were remarkably objectionable, and showed dispositions little less than savage and brutal.

What is most missed now is the sociability which existed when neighbours in a county were at home mostly all the

year round, and all our little excitements made fun for all, and we were dependent on one another for amusements. Near friends then made a little holiday occasionally at very small expense, and got up a little archery and cricket, and the grand old game of bowls on a summer afternoon, without any fuss or ceremony, with a syllabub and cold supper at dark; and the guests were not afraid to walk home three or four miles afterwards, if they did not keep a carriage. I wonder if a syllabub is ever made now, and if any one knows how to make it? Or, again, in the winter, someone would have a rabbit-shooting, or small coursing meeting of a few friends, who would be content with luncheon, consisting of a colossal piece of hunter's beef, and other farm produce, plenty of home-brewed ale, and home-made cherry brandy. This was before the days of champagne, a wine which I never saw or tasted until I was eighteen years of age, and which I drank as cyder, to my cost, in happy ignorance, and tried to persuade myself that a soft corner of a by-lane was a comfortable place to sleep in, and found it so until a good Samaritan, whose opinions differed from mine, picked me up and kept me until I was fit to enter polite society once more.

Then we had our three subscription county balls in the winter, and our pic-nics in the summer, and in all our amusements we were dependent on one another.

The fact is, the country has become Londonised to a great extent, and we have lost our simplicity thereby. The mania for foreign travel has made people comparatively regardless of the old home pleasures, and they look to taking their excitement anywhere except at home. Even lawn-tennis, the most charming amusement and exercise for young ladies as well as gentlemen, is getting demoralized by fashionable toilettes, and champagne cup and competition matches, and prize rackets, and is becoming a business more

than a pleasure, too often. The *soi-disant* match-player is the greatest nuisance imaginable on a country lawn—rushing about playing with both hands (which I believe to be a prostitution of the game of rackets, the essence of which is the back-handed play), and taking every ball, and spoiling everyone else's amusement. It is the old, old story—self-aggrandisement! I don't think our grandmothers, as girls, would have competed in public before a crowd, the qualifications for whose admission was only by paying a shilling at the gate.

Poker, blind hookey, and "Nap," are ousting the solemn old rubber at silver threepennies, and it is not too much to say that a large majority who touch a card now play for money, and not for the amusement. Give me a game of six-card cribbage with a Deal boatman, on a cribbage-board punctuated on an old oak table, with gigantic pegs, against all the modern card-playing of to-day. The solemn silence of the spectators, which is only broken by a muttered "Jack," or "heels," as the knave may turn up, shows the undying interest in the game; the beer remains *un*tasted, the quid *un*turned, the cavendish *un*drawn at the critical moment when it is "hole and hole" within five of the game, and the only chance of the dealer is playing out. It is a match for glory and fame of "The Saucy Nancy" against the London stranger, for twopence a game and sixpence on the rub, with the "Saucy Nancy's" crew looking on. The Bank of England and Barclay and Perkins's Brewery wouldn't square the Deal boatmen. This is *real* sport.

I confess to more than a sneaking liking for the Deal boatmen, as I like the company of men who will go out on a night when sky and sea are a roaring chaos to save life, without any salvage money, too often at the loss of their own. I don't believe in all the virtues belonging to conventional

life. Now this is an impertinent intrusion on my part, for it has nothing to do with Arcadia, but I am reasoning by analogy, on the charms of simple amusement amongst simple people who play for pleasure.

The real matter of fact is, that money now has got into the hands of a few, and the world is going too fast, and the confession of poverty is almost a crime. Luxury and show have supplanted comfort and simple recreations. The University boat race, and cricket match, and the Eton and Harrow match, have become almost a nuisance owing to sensational excitement, and the French are not far wrong when they say "we take our pleasure sadly."

Thanks to Lord Harris the old Kent eleven has been restored; but there is no doubt that until he revived its glories, by searching the county through for players, the previous downfall of Kent was attributable to all interest almost in cricket having been centred in the Canterbury week. Now other towns in England are having a cricket week and all the Saturnalia, in imitation of Canterbury, and they may depend upon it, it will do their home cricket no good, as centralising a game for a short period spoils the taste for home cricket. The effect of this is seen in the county of Surrey. The Oval is doubtless one of the best cricket theatres in England, and being within reach of most of the old cricket centres, people make a day at the Oval, and neglect their village greens. Every youngster of twenty years of age, who can bowl a decent ball, fancies himself a player, and won't play without being paid; the young gentlemen aspire to the county eleven, or to a travelling eleven of "Bounding Britons," or "Flying Cherubims," or some such name, and all the money goes out of the parish, instead of being spent in it; and the stay at-home fogeys button up their pockets and won't subscribe to home clubs which produce no cricketers, and

the county eleven (?) is recruited from strangers imported into Surrey; and country elevens are not encouraged.

Fishing has by no means escaped the sensation mania, Pot-hunting for club-prizes, and the "testimonial mania," the "keeping dark" a good stretch of water for the purpose of "wiping your neighbour's eye," would not have been approved by old Izaak Walton, who told his "Scholar" all he knew, as they sat under the sycamore tree, and he said his simple grace before their homely meal. What would I not have given to have been out with that good old man, and have been his companion at an honest ale-house, where the sheets smelt of lavender and there were plenty of ballads on the walls?

When one does find a primitive village where old fashions prevail it is necessary to keep the information very dark for fear of invasion. I know two or three of such in the heart of Surrey, at the foot of some of the hills, where eggs and bacon and home-brewed ale are not unknown; where, for the sum of one shilling, excellent tea and home-made bread and butter can be obtained, in a brick-floored kitchen with a chimney-corner; and where samplers and ballads yet hang on the walls, and where people are as simple as they were in my boyhood; where each of the umpires take a bat in a match, and where the smock-frocked crowd sit round. In many of such places as these, late in the season, there is a wind-up match, in which all comers are welcome, and there are generally some very good players on either side, and some real "yokels;" the winning or losing being of no importance, as the object of the meeting is a day's fun and a supper. I played in one of these matches, some forty miles from London, last October. A gamekeeper six feet high, without the remotest idea of science, holding his bat at the end of the handle, threshed away with wonderful success, in a style and manner which Mr.

C. J. Thornton might have admired; and the better the bowling the harder he hit, to the great delight of a beery patriarch (the only beery man there), who kept on shouting "Well be-ay-ved" (behaved), and who in his excitement tried to clap his hands and missed them, and pitched on his head off a form. One of the umpires, who was a regular villager, would not give anyone "out" unless he was bowled. In the evening I asked him: *Q* "Were you ever umpire before?" *A*. "Noa," he answered. *Q*. "Did you ever read the laws of cricket?" *A*. "Noa; never he'erd on 'em." *Q*. "Then why did you stand umpire?" *A*. "Because they offered I half-a-crown and a *soopper*, and I never *guv* nobody out, and then I couldn't offend nobody." This is literally true, and occurred on October 1, 1878.

I cannot help my old-fashioned notions, and shall die as I have lived in them; as, though the simplicity of our home amusement has practically died out, the love of that simplicity exists amongst "many men now alive," as Lord Macaulay would have said. I say to those who may outlive me, please *don't* let them burn me—that is treating a Christian like a Hampshire bacon-pig—but I have no objection to being stuffed and put in the British Museum as "the last of the Fogeys."

WHEN WE OLD FOGEYS WERE BOYS.

Don't let us ask how many years ago it was, but we fogeys of the present once were boys; were flogged, learnt impositions, went through the rugged channels of grammar-navigation, had hopes and fears, fights and friendships—and, strange to say, those friendships at intervals of many decades grow again stronger than ever when old schoolfellows meet. Many sketches of school-life have been written with more or less exaggeration and colour, occasionally with no little cant and goody-goody stories, in all of which the preponderance of good on the one side, and of evil on the other, are quite out of proportion to the balance of character in real life; just as in our nursery-books the wicked boy who went out sliding on a Sunday was always drowned, and his companions whom he tempted to the awful crime of Sabbath-breaking were rescued by the good boy, who appeared to have been a combination of the Beckwith family, Captain Webb, an otter, a Royal Humane Society man, a Hercules, and a Low Church parson, all in one.

Public schools proper were very few and far between in

the earlier half of this century, though in these days, since railways and enlightenment in all parts of England, great schools have risen up where the very best education, and everything which is manly and noble, can be acquired in small worlds of boyhood; and the class lists at the Universities, and results of contests in the cricket-field, athletics, and competitive examinations, show that all the virtues and talent do not by any means lie amongst the old schools. Now I am not going to write a history of Winchester, but simply mean to put forward a few tableaux of boys as they were in College some forty years ago. The full complement of the school was seventy College boys—supposed to represent the seventy disciples, though I fear the representatives hardly came up to the example—and 130 Commoners, who were the same as Oppidans at Eton, except that they lived in one large building, under the Head Master, and not with dames or tutors. I may state at once that everything is altered now, and the school, under the Public Schools Act, is very like the Irishman's knife with four new blades and a new handle. The College boys, I think, were not poor scholars, as William of Wykeham intended, but were elected by the wardens of New College and Winchester, the head masters, and two examiners, who were called "posers," and the result was the College to a great extent became a family party, consisting of gentlemen's sons, many of whom had rich fathers, and the same names in many instances appeared for generations. College boys, contrary to the status of Foundation boys generally, had rather the best of things as a rule, as Commoners were dependent on them for the schoolroom and the chapel, and, in public matches in which all joined against an aggressive foe, for a cricket ground also. Moreover, the head College boy was commander-in-chief and autocrat over the whole school whenever Commoners were inside our walls, or the school as a

whole when outside College walls; whereas Commoner prefects had no power over College boys. No anecdotes about bullying. A bully was a bully; and many a good fellow who was not competent for the extraordinary power entrusted to him in boyhood, in after life has expressed his regret for hard things done in his youth.

Fancy the following state of things for public school boys of this present day!—I am only speaking now of College.

The discipline was Spartan. Imagine yourself a junior in a chamber, and at six o'clock, on a winter morning, being aroused by a shoeblack shouting your name into the chamber, hearing which, you had to arise and let him in, call all the chamber, put on a faggot and light the fire, go into the quadrangle and fill all the prefects' washing basins at the open conduit (for no one except prefects and seniors in chambers were allowed to perform their ablutions indoors), and perform your own toilet there also with the snow on the ground, with the thermometer anywhere; see that everybody got up; watch for the master's coming at "bells down," and be in your place in chapel to answer your name. After chapel, you had to run to every prefect who called "Junior!" and you had to do anything he wanted—send for coffee into the town, brush his clothes (but *never* black his boots—that was menial work), and be obliged generally to fag till school time; your next duty was to air your eye at a keyhole and watch for the second master's arrival, and give the "hiss" to warn the school of his approach; then you went up to your lessons till breakfast time, 8.30, probably never having had half time to learn them. At breakfast time you were washing butter and baking toast for your master, and waiting on him, and possibly after breakfast would have to pick up balls at fives until 9.30, having managed to get a mouthful of breakfast yourself or not, as the case might be; you then aired your

eye at a keyhole again, waiting for the head master, and you were in school for two hours and a half—possibly with a little bye-fagging, such as going round to borrow a book, or, in summer, you would be made to "shirk out" to go long-stop to some fellows who were having an unlawful game of cricket. In the summer you fagged at cricket from 12 till 2 (and on holidays all day, more or less), and in the winter you would be fagging at football, kicking in the ball. At 2 o'clock you would air your eye at a key-hole for the third time to watch for a master, and then there were four hours of school before you, out of which you would be up with your class twice; and in these four hours a junior had time to learn something, especially if he had a good boy-tutor. At six o'clock you would be carrying things into chambers for prefects; be fagging all dinner-time from 6 o'clock till 6.30; get something to eat how and when you could, and be in chambers at 6.30 to put on the faggot—for we had blazing fires; light the candles, sweep up the chamber, put things in order, and do everything that you were told till 7. Then would ensue a blessed interval of rest and quiet till 8.30, whilst the boys did their work for next day, unless you were in some bullying chambers, where fellows played cards, in which case you had to watch for a master; then chapel; then bed. I remember that card-playing and drinking had not many followers, and prefects who did it were not in the best set. Your chamber was like a little parish of its own, with two or three prefects in it, as the case might be, and if you had a kind fellow for head prefect, it was a very happy home, provided you were good-tempered and willing; and many kindnesses were shown, the memories of which are pleasant to record. In a boy's second year a junior's position was materially improved, as he would have a lot of boys under him, and he would be promoted to fielding out at cricket,

instead of being *semper* long-stop, be allowed to go off fagging if he made a catch, and if a good field, he would be chosen as a regular fag in single-wicket matches, and would probably pass into the junior eleven, which corresponded with "Sixpenny" at Eton, and if he really stuck to the game, he had a prospect in view of eventually passing into the second eleven, with visions of some day being in the "Lord's eleven," *the* ambition of all. Anyhow, a fag who made the best of matters, and tried all he could, would become popular with prefects and would not have half a bad time of it.

In his social life also he would have a definite status, and become valet to one of the prefects in his chamber, looking after his cricket and football things, and always in attendance on him before and after all sports; and better still, in hall and in chambers he would be initiated into the mysteries of cooking, frying kidneys, potatoes, chops, making coffee, and coming in for the *débris*, for good fellows always had enough for their fags, as well as themselves, and the slavery was divested of many of its hardships. So a boy had three natural protectors—his boy-tutor who was assigned to him, the prefect to whom he was valet, and also the prefect to whom he was breakfast fag; and when in trouble he could go to one or all, and they always took his part, and not unfrequently the boy who bullied the little junior got a good licking on the spot, with a promise of double allowance if he did it again.

There always was a class, mostly muffs, who, when prefects, would have six fellows to watch out at cricket, when three only were wanted, and who thrashed little boys for missing balls which they could not have stopped themselves; who would call "Junior" for the sake of hearing their own voice, to bring them a book which was six yards off; just the same kind of fellows who in after

life make the lives of club servants unbearable, and who are a terror to those under them, in whatever station of life they may be, and make servants, clerks, governesses, and sometimes, if parsons, even curates tremble before them. These were the kind of boys who had three fags to wait on them at breakfast; that meal consisting of College rations and a pot of jam from home, which was tied down and lasted a week; who were always finding a speck of dirt on a knife or on a cloth, for which they thrashed the unfortunate junior. Juniors delighted to be one of a number of fags who waited on a breakfast mess of three good fellows—good at football and cricket—who had a dish of kidneys, a dozen eggs, fried potatoes and chops for breakfast, with endless toast and coffee. A fag might get a flea in his ear sometimes for clumsiness or carelessness, but masters and fags formed a little family party of their own.

Then as regards the inmates of the school generally. Winchester being one of the capitals of the West was easy of access to West of England men, many of whose sons came there; and the advantage of having a boy under the discipline of one of the oldest public schools was thought more of in many cases than education, and sons of many country gentlemen would go there, and be perfectly content to remain in the lower forms until they left at seventeen or eighteen years of age. So much was this the case that one year an eleven from the three lowest forms played all Commoners at cricket and beat them. It looked funny to see big fellows in tail coats and more than incipient whiskers standing up by the side of little fellows of twelve years old, in an awful fog over an easy passage in Ovid, which, though easy to the youngsters, was a terrible stumbling-block to them; but so it was. On the other hand, it was for nobody's good when a very young fellow with immense

ability ran rapidly up the school, and became a prefect without any long apprenticeship to fagging, and possibly physically weak and practically inexperienced. These were the class who, immediately they got off fagging, abandoned every sport and took to "constitutionals" in the summer and fire-side coteries in the winter; and by these fire-side coteries much bullying was brewed, in the absence of manly fellows who were engaged in athletics.

Now as regards our sports: cricket and football were of course the chief, and as we had no professional we learned our cricket by ourselves; and to show that we must have learnt it pretty well, Harrow beat us for the first time in 1837 on their own ground, though they collared and headed us in after years, the school matches having commenced in 1825. We held our own too, well, against Eton. Fielding and hard hitting were our proclivities, and the Winchester barter, the half-volley—named after Warden Barter, who was a giant in strength and stature—is not unknown.

To show what coaching will do, old Lillywhite in 1851—2 the first professional ever engaged —*ætat* 59, trained the eleven in that and in the following year, and the Winchester boys won both matches at Lord's two years running, in 1851-2, after losing both matches for five years. Oh! why did the Dons ever stop those glorious matches at Lord's?

We had one great drawback at Lord's, which was, that not more than six or seven of our real eleven were ever up there, as the school broke up a fortnight before the matches. And we made one vital mistake, which was, not to make long stop, as it is now, one of the most important places in the field; and boys who had been excellent as juniors gave it up as drudgery when they got into the eleven, and the consequence is that our list of byes at Lord's looks very bad now, as does that of other schools of that era.

In the winter badger-hunting was a favourite sport, and

we always kept a badger and a huntsman, who provided two terriers and a bull-dog during the winter. It was a sporting school, as Hampshire was a very sporting county, added to which a large number of the boys were sons of fox-hunting country gentlemen, and many of their boys hunted in the holidays.

Perhaps it would astonish the dons now to see boys going on to St. Catherine's Hill (part of the Portsmouth Downs range) in white cord breeches, brown cloth leggings, tight at the knee and falling loose over the boots, green cut-away coats and gilt basket buttons, coming out of College on a holi lay morning: but such was the usual dress of many Commoners on holidays, and the big College fellows high up in the school, who wore gowns, adopted the cords and gaiters. The badger-hunting was excellent fun, though I suppose we should be fined five pounds by the magistrates now for following the sport. The badger was turned out of the sack and started up the downs, and it was a good fine breather, running four or five miles, mostly uphill, on a winter's morning. When we had had enough the bull-dog was let go to pin the badger, and after a stiffish tussle sometimes the badger went into the sack to live to fight another day. Not a few boys kept guns, and many a stray hare and partridge came to hand, and I have known such a thing as a duck or goose turn up, but it did not much matter, as, when old Warden Barter was king, farmers got paid for College damages. Foot steeplechasing from the top of the downs to St. Cross, across two rivers and the water-meadows, was also a favourite amusement for a change. Then there was the sporting fraternity, who took in *Bell's Life*, got up lotteries, and had a small Tattersall's of their own, and made shilling books, and paid up too; but I never knew little boys urged to subscribe or anything of that sort, as recorded in "Tom Brown." Any boy trying

on such a game would have been sent to Coventry by the whole school, and I fancy the betting was a very small matter.

Sometimes prisoners get restless and break out into insubordination, and it is the case too in lunatic asylums and occasionally in schools. I never can understand to this day why or wherefore a large number of boys, seventy or eighty at least, suddenly took a violent dislike to half a load of hay which was left on a canal bridge. The waggon had been overloaded, and the farmer had carted half away, and the waggon was waiting for the return of the horses. Someone suggested "Let us pitch this waggon into the river." Now the farmer was a popular man, as he never split upon us if we did any mischief, and he winked at the fellows shooting in the water-meadows and on his farm. No doubt, being a tenant of the College, he took care of himself when he paid his rent. Somehow the demon of mischief was abroad, and in a few minutes the waggon, under the influence of many hands and a lever or two toppled grandly sideways; there was a crash, the side of the bridge disappeared, and nothing was visible but four waggon wheels in the air, above the water, to the great astonishment of some bargees who were coming with a barge quick round the corner, and who, with great difficulty stopped her "way" before the barge charged the waggon, for which event we were anxiously looking. Again, one window of new Commoners—an ugly, workhouse-like building, which looked into the school quadrangle—being accidentally broken, the boys suddenly hated *all* the windows and smashed the lot, just as they did with the new slates of College Mill, the colours of which they disapproved. The curious part of their eccentric proceedings was, that all the school seemed seized with the same madness, and the steady fellows who never fell into scrapes hardly, broke out the

worst. We never heard anything about that waggon-load of hay, directly, though an uncle of one of the boys who was staying with the warden let the cat out of the bag, and told his nephew that the warden laughed heartily about it. I suppose the truth was that it was a second crop of water-meadow hay of little value, or the waggon was not hurt, and it went into the tenant's bill.

Ah, the dear old warden! he was the king of men, the greatest athlete of his day at Oxford, and the hardest hitter ever known at cricket, and the Winchester "Barter hit," the half volley, was named after him. He was as big as Alfred Mynn, and the kindest-hearted man in the world, though very impetuous. When in a scrape it was always best to receive his fire and let him pass sentence of death on you unheard. It was usually the same thing: you were ruining your prospects for life, were bringing down your father's grey hair with sorrow to the grave, &c., &c. And when he had quite done, the thing was to ask to be heard, and to tell him the whole truth right out, and say you were very sorry. He was ready enough to help you over the stile, and it usually ended with a few kind words, for any condonable offence, and a parting word, "If you are writing to your father, will you remember me very kindly to him?—good bye. Now remember what I say."

When Freeman, the American giant, a prizefighter, came over here with Caunt from New York and fought the Tipton Slasher, after a short London career his health broke down, and he was taken in at Winchester hospital. He stood nearer seven than six feet, and weighed twenty-one stone when in health; but the poor fellow was sadly wasted, and his brother giant, the warden, took care of him, and baptized him himself, and watched him daily through his last illness, and attended him when dying.

When the Eton boys went to Winchester to play their

match, the warden entertained the two elevens and all kind of Eton dons royally at dinner, and when the warden died, and the Provost of Eton preached on him in Eton chapel, and alluded to the cricket and the warden's hospitality to the eleven, there was not a dry eye amongst the Eton boys.

We had a little world of our own, and never recorded our sports, except our cricket scores. Fighting, except amongst the little boys, was not much cultivated, as boys who had been juniors together and fellow sufferers in early hardships grew up pretty much knowing their own powers; but occasionally there would be a real fight, with the cognisance and full concurrence of the prefects, and that was when two big fellows had a deadly feud and neither would apologise. I remember two very memorable fights, in one of which two inferiors—*i.e.*, not prefects—of eighteen years of age, who were high up in the school, and both of them in the football team, fought. They were larking with two switches, and one hit the other accidentally in the face, which was immediately returned by a left-hander. They were separated, but they both determined to fight, and fight they did at twelve o'clock in Commoners, and I went in to see it. There was little science, but awful slogging, and one was clean knocked out of time in twenty minutes, and the doctor had a hard job to get him round, as there was much threatening of blood to the brain. He had to go home after a few days. His opponent, who was a very good fellow, was in great distress about the effect of his own handiwork, and was constantly with his former foe; and they both agreed they had been a couple of fools, and nothing but the dread of being considered cowards prevented them from shaking hands without fighting.

Another fight between a College and Commoner inferior, *ætat* each about seventeen, was an equally bloodthirsty affair; and the vanquished had to be put to bed and kept in

a dark room for a considerable time. No doubt these are things of the past; but boys of that age, who have a keen sense of injured honour, and reckless as regards consequences, and without science, ought never to have been allowed to fight. It was downright dangerous. According to the legends of the prize-ring fatal accidents were not commoner than those in the hunting-field or steeplechase, and many other sports; but then the men were trained and scientific, and, moreover, the seconds interfered in cases of danger.

In 1824 the Hon. Mr. Ashley, brother of Lord Shaftesbury, I presume, fought two hours and a half, and was killed, at Eton; but then both boys were plied with brandy, as was admitted on the inquest.

I had only one fight of any consequence, and that was when sixteen years old. A practical joke was played on me by another boy of as nearly my own age and size as possible. I hit him straight in the face just before chapel on Sunday, and we were separated; and although mutual friends tried to pacify us, fight we would, as we hated one another, being about equals in school position and everything else, and we felt one must be master. My antagonist was, when at the Bar, the author of the "Log of the Water Lily," and was the pioneer who, in 1850, went up the Rhine in a four-oared boat. He was seconded by his cousin, who now is Rector of Rew in Devonshire. We fought in the schoolroom on Monday morning forty-eight rounds in an hour and a quarter, and were interrupted by school-time, and agreed to go on again at twelve o'clock. The prefects then interfered and made us shake hands, which we did most willingly, as being thrown on an oak floor was no joke, and we were both of us very stiff and tired and a good deal punished; and from that day forward he and I and his second messed together, and were firm friends as long as we remained in

the school; and, curiously enough, the Rector of Rew, whom I had not seen for years, came and stayed with me during the last Australian match at the Oval, by his own invitation; and my former foe, whom I had not seen for twenty years, walked into my chambers most unexpectedly *as I was writing this very article.*

It was a curious life in past days, as boys were mostly left to form their own characters; and in those days Commoners remained at school till nineteen very often, and College boys who were of the founder's kin and waited for a New College vacancy sometimes remained till twenty, and in known instances one or even two years longer. One well-known cricketer was at Lord's from the year 1839 till 1843, both inclusive, and was captain for three years, and *he* had cut all *his* teeth, as he was of the "Founder's kin," over twenty-two years of age, and was waiting for a fellowship at Oxford. Every Wykehamist of that era will remember that captain Villiers Chernocke Smith, the immortal "Podder," so named after one of the champions in the All Muggleton and Dingley Dell match. On reference to the list of men in Church and State, I think our "output"—to use a mining term—was equal to that of most schools. The principle was self-government without masters' espionage. When not in school or chapel the whole discipline was left to the boys themselves. There were eighteen perfects in College and a few subordinates with limited power, and the management was very much assimilated to that of a regiment. Two things were certain—which was, that the governors and the governed amongst the boys knew what their powers and duties were, and the governed knew that what had to be done must be done, and they soon learned that willingness and good-humour saved them a great deal of trouble and annoyance, and, without knowing it, they acquired habits of obedience and discipline which

lasted them for life. Correspondents who know nothing about the value of school discipline write a lot of rubbish to the papers about "the lads having ushers." If instead of writing they would go down and address the boys on the subject, and the river was handy, what then? In every place, and at all hours of the day and night some prefect was answerable for what was going on, and if he neglected his duty and countenanced things which he ought not, his power would be taken away at once, and he would practically be reduced to the ranks; and great was the downfall of that boy. In cases of this kind came out the real boy-character, and if the deposed prefect was a bully all the juniors would rejoice in his fall and not move a hand for him, but if he was a good fellow every junior would anticipate his wishes and volunteer to do everything for him as if he had the power to fag them. As regards discipline and tunding—tunding by prefects' court-martial was a great institution properly used—abused it was positively infernal. Big fellows, tribunes of the people, were the victims generally; and if they chose to be guilty of breaches of discipline and *would* play cards, or get in spirits, or go into the town out of bounds, and a prefect who was answerable for discipline caught them, they had their choice of a dozen or so with a ground ash across their shoulders before the school, or go before the authorities. In nineteen cases out of twenty the culprits took the tunding. It was soon over; all the boys knew what it was for, and if the offence was uncontaminated by anything low or sneaking or dishonourable, no one thought the worse of the prefect who did it or the boy who suffered the punishment; and you would sometimes see tunder and tundee playing in the same match at football or cricket as if nothing had happened, just as I once saw a second master who had flogged a boy in school at 12 o'clock, caught out by the culprit at 12.30 in a match

It is needless to say that both "smoled a smile." As I said before, bullying prefects belonged to the fireside coteries, who wore rings and used bear's grease, never dirtied their boots or ruffled their hair or neckcloths, and asked one another little riddles, *ergo*, milksops.

And now, perhaps, you will ask, what good did this kind of discipline ever do to me? I will tell you. It taught me a kind of rough-and-ready code of laws of fair play and honour, and stamped out false pride; and if I had to bring a brown paper parcel to you, and could not afford a cab, I would walk through London with it under my arm and would not be ashamed to do it. And, secondly, if you and I were in the wilds and we came across any eatable animal, I believe I could cut him up and cook him in a way which would make your mouth water, cook a pudding in a pot-lid, and could do hundreds of things for you and me which I should never be able to do but for my boyhood's apprenticeship. Why, if the Prince of Wales sent word that he would come and breakfast with me—how could I do him most honour? Would I send for a professed cook from London? Never! I would write to my old schoolfellow and former breakfast-fag, Frank Buckland, the best cook and coffee-maker in the world when a boy, and would say, "Frank, my boy, do your best!" And I will venture to say that H.R.H. would remark, "My mother would like to knight your cook." The manly feeling generated in the little world of a public school has made it an impossibility to me ever to offer three fingers of my left hand to a man who is supposed to be below me in life; for that is the special privilege of the purse-proud snob, whom I should remarkably like to have for a fag now, and I would do what I was not fond of doing as a boy, and lick him within an inch of his life.

One word about the big idle fellows. Hear what General

Shute, V.C., an ardent Wykehamite, said at the Wykehamist dinner some few years back in the presence of Wardens, Masters, Judges, and Bishops. The general was returning thanks for the army, and claimed Winchester as his first teacher in military matters, as he was there grounded in punctuality, discipline, and obedience; and he added, almost in these words: "And if you would think less of the competitive examinations for the army, and let us have your strong, idle football-players and cricketers who cannot learn much Latin and Greek, and send them to us at seventeen years old, any good colonel or adjutant will either make good soldiers of them in twelve months, or return them on your hands, Queen's hard bargains." General Shute was quite right; for out of the idle division of my day, many left their bones in the Crimea, India, and other foreign countries, and many, fortunately, are either good and gallant soldiers or useful in other walks of life, and would be very handy now to bring Shere Ali (whom for the convenience of memory has been christened Mr. Shire Lane) out of Cabul. How much twaddle have we not heard at school dinners about "our gallant brothers who sleep in the Crimea and India," not spoken by men who rode in the six hundred, or who relieved Lucknow, but by after-dinner table-thumpers, who are the very men who support the head masters in their hobby of keeping out manly backward boys who want teaching, and to whom the school discipline would be advantageous—and who used to be the material from which "our gallant brothers" came—in favour of competitive examinationers, who come in with a supply of grammar ready laid on and thereby save the masters a deal of trouble.

The late Lord Herbert, when Mr. Sidney Herbert, Secretary at War, said, in the House of Commons, that the qualifications for a staff-officer were: 1. Knowledge of

French or German. 2. A quick eye for a line of country, with power to make an intelligible sketch of it. 3. To be able *to ride well across it*—which last qualification, he said, was most important of all. And I am not singular in believing that Lord Herbert was right. I am not preaching that our discipline and manners and customs were perfect by any means, but I believe that, as boys, we had to cut our own way pretty much by ourselves, and I don't think that boys of the present day would be much hurt if some of their luxuries and expenses were curtailed.

One thing is quite certain, which is that masters of large schools have now run up the costs as high as possible, and if their predecessors, the Consuls of our boyhood, buttered their bread on one side, a good many of the present masters and school authorities take precious good care to butter it on both sides, and I think headmasters' conferences would be more valuable if paterfamilias had his hearing at them.

DE SENECTUTE.

If we are allowed to see the ancient writers in the next world I hope to have the pleasure of punching the heads of Livy and Tacitus, my two favourite aversions, of thanking Publius Virgilius Maro, Esq., for writing pretty rural sketches in the Eclogues, the shipwreck of Æneas, quite as good as "Robinson Crusoe," the visit of Æneas to Lady Dido—on which occasion Pater Æneas did not prove his p iety—and the description of the sports in the Æneid, especially the mill between Dares and Entellus, quite equal to "Bell's Life." At the same time I should make my lowest obeisance to Marcus Tullius Cicero for his writing his two works, "De Amicitiâ" and "De Senectute," which used to be, and I hope still are, the first strong food in Latin prose, which schoolboys learnt. I suppose the scheme of introducing two old fogeys Lælius and Scævola walking and talking in their garden gave a reality to the first work. At any rate, under a good master who thoroughly appreciated the authors, Cicero and Virgil always went with a stamp and a go, and I never grudged the time and trouble of learning a good deal of both by heart. And one word about that master. He was an old Harrovian, now Bishop of St. Andrew's, and a splendid athlete, and could beat any boy in the school at running, jumping, swimming, rackets,

and rowing, and played with the straightest bat I ever saw. I never shall forget his horror when a boy in the hunting scene in Æn. IV (when, by-the-bye, Mr. Æneas changed his quarry and found himself with Lady Dido in the summer-house), in which the boy Ascanius is described on his pony cracking his whip, construed "*insonuitque flagello*" "played on his pipe," taking a shot at *flagello* as "flageolet." I forget what was the eventuality, but I hope that boy was flogged for not using his dictionary, and for the awful murder of Mr. Virgil his poem.

It is about a green old age that I am talking now, and the question is, who are the men who attain it as a rule? I believe the athlete and the active man of business have the best chance, provided that they lead a sober life. We all know that, as a rule, the old shepherds on the downs are like the donkeys and never die. This question of old age was discussed in some of the papers when Mr. Budd, the cricketer and sportsman, died a few years since, aged ninety, also when Lord Lyndhurst died at a very great age; and the average age of the old "B eleven" (an Eleven of cricketers, enrolled by Lord Frederick Beauclerck), whose names began with B, of which Mr. Budd was one, added up after their deaths, came to over eighty years each. We all remember the jaunty way in which Lord Palmerston jogged down to the Derby, and the light quick step with which the late Lord Campbell and the late Lord Chelmsford used to walk down to the court of a morning, and, by-the-bye, the present Lord Chief Justice of England is not the slowest man on his feet. And we remember how Archbishop Sumner, when an octogenarian, as upright as a dart stepped out on his way to the House of Lords; that grand old man who, in his old age, wrote seven volumes on the Epistles, and at his death sent a presentation copy to every incumbent in his diocese; working on the quiet to

the last. Parson Russell, we know, was a living example of an iron constitution, and so was Wenman, the old Kent wicket keeper; and although feeble in limbs, at ninety, the late Lord Lyndhurst made a celebrated speech in the House of Lords, every word of which was as clear as a bell.

I tell you what I believe, good reader, and it is this. We go upon wheels more than we ought, and we travel too much and too quick; it is all railway and hansom now, and we are always running a race against time, and we have our heads in the manger too much, and it is too much refreshment bar wherever we are. Except on Sundays, perhaps, when there is nothing to do, we hardly ever do what was the custom when we were boys, when we used to take an eight or ten mile walk to the races or a cricket match, or a good stretch to a meet of the hounds and a run with them afterwards. An athlete who leads a life of indolence after he has laid aside his weapons, whether cricket bat, the cœstus, the oar, or what not, and indulges in dissipation is a sure victim for the undertaker, in proof whereof I can quote Pierce Egan's lecture on self-defence, delivered in 1845, which contains the history and career of all the great prize-fighters from the earliest period till the date of the lecture; and it is melancholy to see how many died of drink; and unfortunately in our own experience how many of our best athletes have done the same on their retirement; whereas, on the other hand, fortunately, we see how tough some are.

I came across two specimens of the old school lately, such as one seldom sees, one of whom broke the King's peace as often as most men, and the other had helped to preserve the peace of Europe, early in this century; the first named is aged seventy-nine on Christmas-day next and the second eighty-eight, and both of them are as hale and hearty as any two men in England. I met the first some two or

three years ago at a benefit in Cambridge Hall, Newman Street, at which it was announced the best men in London would appear, and that the non-commissioned officers in the Household Brigade would contend with single-sticks and broadsword and the gloves. It was a high-priced benefit, and the bill was an arrant sell, and the only thing which I gained was sitting next to a bright, lively, elderly man who evidently had been a frequenter of the ring and a performer also, as, on speaking of Crib's final benefit a short time before his death, which occurred somewhat over thirty years ago, he said to me, "I put on the gloves with Tom Spring that night." "Then who are you?" I asked. "Jem Ward," he replied. Accident threw me in his way the other day, and I spent a couple of hours with him, and it seemed hardly possible that I was talking to a man who received the champion belt from Spring in 1831 at the Fives' Court, and who had been in the ring as early as 1816, and had fought White headed Bob, Tom Cannon, and men who seem to me to have lived before the Christian era. He fought over twenty battles and has led a regular active life from youth upwards, and there he is now, one of nature's gentlemen, just as poor Tom Spring was, in manner, fit to sit at anyone's table, full of information, with innumerable anecdotes of days and people and things long past, and as he is going to put his recollections on paper shortly, he will tell his own story much better than I could. He is now an inmate of the Licensed Victuallers' Asylum at Peckham, a most admirable home, where he has his comfortable quarters and goes on with his painting, which has been the hobby of his life. He leads an active life in his seventy-ninth year, holding a place of trust at suburban race meetings. It is needless to say that he is abstemious in living, and his great delight is a good cigar of an evening. He looks much more like a retired country gentleman than what people of

strong imaginations paint as a prize-fighter of the past, but then he belongs to the old school, when prize-fighters were supported by the greatest and noblest in the land, and their followers acquired the manners of their associates.

Turning to legitimate warfare, let us look for a moment at another sample of old English stuff in the shape of an old soldier *ætat* 88, a hale, hearty, bright-eyed, cheerful old man, from whom now I should be very sorry to receive a cut from the soft end of an oak stick, let alone a sword. Let us imagine that it is a fine Sunday afternoon, and that we are sitting in a comfortable little house in a Surrey upland at Carshalton, near Sutton, and that round the walls of the room hang pictures, and on the tables are books about Napoleon, the Duke, and Waterloo, &c., and that there is a cavalry sword hanging up against the wall of one room, faced by an old Russian musket opposite. Let us carry our imagination a little further, and that we have refused the offer of sherry or grog, and that a handy maid has produced some beer after our walk. On the table lies a very excellent plan of Waterloo (which I took him over), copied from an official plan which I am fortunate enough to possess, prepared in 1815 by order of the Duke of York, which the writer of this has travelled over again and again and compared with other French and English plans against the Duke's dispatches, "Gleig's Waterloo," and most known books on the subject, besides having on several occasions, when in Belgium, surveyed the ground itself; and imagine that, for *once* in his life, the writer is listening and not talking.

Room, if you please, for Mr. James Simmonds, formerly of the 7th Hussars. "In answer to your question why I became a soldier, it was thus: My father was a farmer and market gardener, well to do, on Mitcham Common, holding what is now Watney's farm. I was drawn for the Militia

in 1812, and was always being wanted to go to Tooting Common and Clapham Common, and was bothered to death by a sergeant who kept me with old Brown Bess at 'present arms,' recover arms,' till my own arms were fit to drop off, and I said to myself, 'I'll do the regular thing sooner than this,' and went off and enlisted in the 7th Hussars at Mitcham, along with a neighbour, Richard Alfrey, who was in that Regiment in 1813. I was with the depot, first at Guildford and then at Arundel, and afterwards the Regiment had come home and we lay at Brighton under Lord Uxbridge as colonel. We had been wanted once or twice in London for bread riots, and lay at the King's Mews, where Trafalgar Square now is. The news came in 1815, that Napoleon had escaped, and we were ordered to the Low Countries, and marched to Dover and embarked for Ostend, we carrying our saddles and kit on board ship, and waiting at Ostend for our horses, which were shipped separate. When we got our horses we marched first fifteen miles from Ostend, and then went into cantonments, and subsequently marched across to the scene of the three great battles, on the 15th of June being in the neighbourhood of Quatre Bras and Genappe. On that day we were ordered to sharpen our swords and prepare for active service, and to draw double rations on the morning of the 16th; but at 3 o'clock a.m., the trumpet sounded, and officers and sergeants were rushing about calling the men to turn out at once, so we went without rations; and from that moment until after the battle of Waterloo on the 18th, we had no rations, and were never off duty. The horses had a glorious time of it, as they ate as much standing corn as they pleased everywhere, but as for us, beyond a chance piece of bread and biscuit which we sometimes came across, and some bad spirits which we bought from sutlers, who hung about, we went without. But then you know we were too

busy to think, we were doing picket and patrol duty all during the battle of Quatre Bras, and all night, and next day we had to clear the road, which was blocked with carts and waggons and guns, on the 17th, for the army to retire on Waterloo, and our regiment protected the rear for the passage of the army at Genappe. There was a ford there, and the way was very narrow, and we were attacked by French cavalry and were ordered to charge them. They were Lancers, but only one troop of ours could get at them at a time, and we could not move them; and I can see and hear Lord Uxbridge now and could swear to what he said, 'Get back, 7th, for God's sake!—threes about;' and we were re-formed, though we lost our major (Hodge) and adjutant (Mears), and as we were clear, we let the 1st Life Guards through, and saw them go at the French cavalry; and they regularly crashed into them with sheer weight, and having once broken them they cut them to pieces, or took them prisoners. The Life Guards went all fresh and excited as they saw us driven back, and they went at them like madmen. Most of the French soldiers were drunk, as they had sacked the liquor stores at Genappe. Well, to go on to the Battle of Waterloo. We we on the Mont St. Jean side of Hougoumont on the morning, but we had been mostly on patrol duty and picket at night, as there were so few light cavalry, and the Belgians did not do what was expected of them, and we had to snatch a bit of sleep and get a bit of bread and biscuit and a drop of spirits as we could. The first shot, which reached us on the 18th, was a round shot, and I can see her now; my next man was a tailor, and a good soldier too, and he laughed and said, 'What do you think of that, Jim?' but the next shot took Sergeant Haslop's horse and thigh, and I asked him, 'What do you think of that, then?' As you know we did our bit that day, protecting the guns and

supporting the first line, and when we made the last charge my horse was shot under me, and I caught a French horse and charged with the 18th Hussars, having lost my regiment, and we rested for that night near Belle Alliance, on the position the French held in the morning; and we got our first real meal early on the 19th. We afterwards moved on to Cambray and saw the reduction of the town, and then our fighting was over, and we marched on to Paris."

The rest of the old gentleman's narrative contained the incidents of the occupation of Paris, the grand review by the Duke of Wellington, and Mr. Simmonds' subsequent service when the regiment came home. At St. Omer he was soldier-servant to three different officers, from time to time, and his anecdotes are very amusing. It is no use mentioning names and particulars, as the families of the officers might not like it, but they may depend upon it that their forefathers did *not* lead anchorite lives when peace came, and I expect they were pretty much what the old soldier described them, "the most dare-devil lot in the world, splendid officers under whom no man would be afraid, but by *no means* 'a regular family.'" He stuck to the regiment till it came home, the last which landed, and on being offered his discharge after seven years' service accepted it, the fighting being over; and, like Cincinnatus, returned to the farm and did the early Covent Garden business for his father. On the sale of some of the horses he bought one, which had a bullet in the thigh, called "Button Stick Joe"—so called because his rider lost his kit and everything except his sword, his horse, and his button-stick—and having made his purchase, he rode the horse home to his father's house on Mitcham Common, and made not a little sensation in his hussar jacket and cap, which are now under a glass case at the museum at

Waterloo, which he visited two years since, on the Waterloo day, and had a special dinner of his friends at the inn, where the museum is; and which he would visit again had he not been crippled for life owing to an accident on the South-Western Railway in getting out of a carriage on his way home from Aldershot, two years since, for which he had the pleasure of paying over £100 in costs in an action which he lost, against the company. That action is a little sore point, though, soldier-like, he says, "If I could have got those d—d lawyers of mine in the wigs out of the way, and told the judge my own story, I should have won."

Don't make any mistake, the old gentleman is no braggart, and very truthful, with a real soldier's heart in him, in his green old age; and he says, "If I wasn't a cripple I should like to go again *now*, though it would be my turn to go as officer, I think." He is no *laudator temporis acti*, but I believe what he says, which is that England was saved by the sheer pluck of every individual who fought those battles, and the campaign, short as it was, was decided, as regards the hand-to-hand work, by English physique and English horses.

One question I asked him, which was about army flogging. He is dead against it, and says, "If a soldier *deserves* to be flogged, kick him out and let him starve, and no one will pity him; if he has the making of a good soldier flogging would ruin him; if he is a bad one it will make him a thorough blackguard."

When an admirable article appeared in *Baily's Magazine* on Owen Swift, one of the London press was good enough to say it was vulgar: a little bird at the asylum whispered to me that the writer was very kind to the dying pugilist in his latter days. I have no doubt but that the Priest and the Levite said the good Samaritan's twopence was a plant

for his own benefit. *Chacun a son gout.* The writer of the article forgot that all the London papers made a pretty penny out of Sayers and Heenan within the last twenty years, and would do so again to-morrow if they had the chance. Now for old Jem Ward. My humble creed is that men who have lived, like Jem Ward, in a rough and ready world, and have followed a calling which abounded with rascality and swindling, and have come out with clean hands, are an honour to their country and an example for us all; for let us remember how carefully we were brought up and how crooked has been our course in many cases. I remember—reverting to school days—a boy who is now a dignitary of the Church, reading out in Prefect's library, amidst much applause, Deaf Burke's speech on returning from America, in which (exhibiting an American bowie knife) he informed his audience that he would sooner be hung in this world, and—omitting the Deaf un's words, which were un-Shakesperian—would go to everlasting perdition in the next, than see such a weapon in the hands of an Englishman. The Deaf un was not much of a preacher, and fell into the Slough of Despond in his latter days, but I say that those words have a wholesome moral; and I only wish I was a magistrate, or a judge, and had the power of inflicting punishment on every knifing ruffian.

On the first occasion of my being in a criminal court I heard old Baron Gurney, at Maidstone, give a jury a tremendous wigging for insisting on a verdict of manslaughter, when he summed up for murder, in a case where a sweep had quarrelled with a man and had gone away for some time and had got a knife and *sharpened* it, and came back and stabbed his enemy; and some years afterwards I read an account of a trial at which Baron Alderson, the kindest and best of men, gave a man a heavy sentence for using a knife, to the best of my recollection in these very

words: "If men will quarrel and fight, nature has provided them with the proper weapons; and, prisoner, you have no excuse."

Looking back to an old school roll I picked out the names of a few fellows older than myself, who really were good at boxing when I was a little boy. Every one of them was kind to me and never bullied; two are very known clergymen, one of whom is immortalised by his fighting and beating the town bully named Jupe, in 1836, who was a man of five and twenty, in five rounds, at Twyford cross-roads. I held his clothes and saw it. The fight is recorded in Adams' "Wykehamica." For a wonder the boys were in the right, as the roughs, of whom Jupe was one, had cruelly beaten some little college boys. To do the roughs justice, they kept a fair ring, and their man fought fair, and was knocked clean out of time. Another bowled in Gentlemen *v.* Players when a boy at school; another is a very distinguished retired cavalry officer, a fifth is a well-known church architect, who pulled in the Cambridge boat, and the sixth was a fine steeple-chase rider and rare good officer, who fell by the colours of the 23rd at the Alma in 1854. The best man I ever knew in London died last year: he was one of young Reed's best pupils (ranking with Billy Duff and Thomas Knox Holmes, and amateurs of that stamp), as was each of his four sons. His theory was that all boys should swim like otters, and be igorant of fear, and from the time they were little boys his sons learned the noble art thoroughly. The eldest was in the army, and died after the West African campaign; the second passed an admirable staff examination, and now is on active service; the third has a high civil appointment in India, and the fourth is in an irregular cavalry regiment now. One son received a medal from the Royal Humane Society for swimming out in a heavy sea

and saving life at Ramsgate, and the father's body, on its way to Highgate cemetery, was carried across a canal bridge, off which he jumped, in 1849, at twelve o'clock in a terrifically stormy night in November, and saved a woman who was drowning in the basin. He had left my chambers that evening, when a regular tempest was raging, and refused to take a bed, as he said that "he enjoyed a walk in a storm;" and, on reaching the canal bridge, in Camden Town, he found an excited mob shouting, but doing nothing practically, to help the drowning woman. The bridge is close to Grafton Street East, and the woman was close to the lock-gate, a considerable distance from the bridge.

The late warden of Winchester was an astonishing athlete, and at Oxford was champion of the University. When a tutor at New College he constantly walked from Oxford to London and *vice versa*; and on one occasion, when a passenger on the coach was using very blasphemous language and declined to desist, he seized him and held him over the side of the coach, and threatened to drop him in the road unless he promised to behave better. Let it be remembered also that he attended Freeman the American giant's death-bed all through his last illness.

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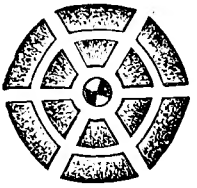
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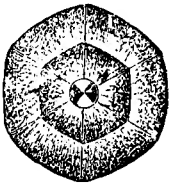
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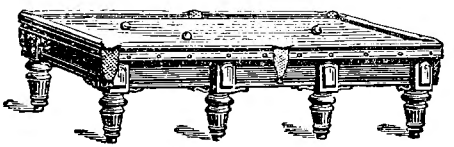
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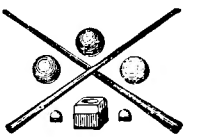
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